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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26 1996

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BEST FOR JOBS

WANTED

- Director 90K
- Man. Director 80K
- Planner 55K
- HR head 50K

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Brown opts for 50p top rate of tax

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR

GORDON BROWN is considering a new 50p top rate of income tax for earnings of more than £100,000 a year, members of the Shadow Cabinet were told yesterday.

The Shadow Chancellor's decision to lift the veil on his tax plans at a pre-conference meeting surprised his fellow frontbenchers — and displeased several who had been pressing for a new top rate to come in at a much lower level to finance extra spending on health and education.

They will complain at a later meeting that the introduction of such a high figure — which would

affect less than 1 per cent of the working population — would be a purely symbolic move that would have little impact in terms of extra spending. The Inland Revenue estimates that some 120,000 people earn more than £100,000. A higher tax on earnings over that figure would raise £1 billion.

Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary and effective leader of the Left, heads a group of Shadow Cabinet members in charge of spending areas who favour a more redistributive tax policy and believe

Mr Brown should pitch the earnings level well below £100,000. Mr Cook would be expected to have the backing of David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, Chris Smith, the Shadow Health Secretary, and probably John Prescott, the Deputy Leader.

Yesterday, at a National Executive Committee meeting, Mr Cook and others questioned why Mr. Brown had not included a cut-off figure for richer families when he announced his plans to replace child benefit for 16 to 18-year-olds

with education allowances to encourage the children of poorer families to stay at school.

The leadership decided against setting the figure to avoid giving a clue of its thinking on the higher rate tax — it has been assumed by Shadow Cabinet members that the top rate and child benefit cut-off figures would be the same.

It was when the Shadow Cabinet was discussing the child benefit plan later yesterday that Mr Brown disclosed his thinking on a higher tax rate, although he added that he

would be making no announcements on tax policy until after the Budget on November 26.

The Shadow Chancellor's announcement comes after a stream of hints about Tony Blair's determination not to hit the middle classes and Mr Blair's personal inclination has been to leave the top rate unchanged at 40p. Some modernisers may still press him to persuade Mr Brown to go for that figure, but the Shadow Chancellor is in a position of huge strength in the leadership and Mr Blair would

be reluctant to overrule him.

As it is, the rate and figure favoured by Mr Brown will upset some traditional Labour supporters who believe the party has to be bolder over tax if it is to fulfil its social obligations.

The other key decision for the Labour leadership will be its response to the Budget if Mr Clarke decides to knock 1p or 2p off the 24p standard rate of income tax. If the cut is 2p, some members of the Shadow Cabinet are to press Mr Blair and Mr Brown to reverse

half of it and earmark the £1.8 billion raised for health and education. But it is unlikely that either would go along with that strategy. They are expecting the Conservatives to lay a tax trap for them and would be reluctant to walk into it.

Mr Brown's disclosure to his colleagues yesterday is the clearest evidence that he is determined to prevent the Tories repeating their "tax bombshell" campaign of the last general election. The only other signal so far of the leadership's tax plans has been the indication that it is looking at a new bottom rate of 10-15 per cent, an idea that has gone down well in the party.

Unity appeal, page 11

Blair threatens to expel MP over Adams visit

By PHILIP WEBSTER, NICHOLAS WATT AND JAMES LANDALE

THE Labour leadership last night threatened to eject Jeremy Corbyn from the parliamentary party for his "reprehensible" behaviour in inviting Gerry Adams to the House of Commons today.

Tony Blair and his Chief Whip, Donald Dewar, were furious that the leftwing backbencher should be bringing the Sinn Fein president to Westminster so soon after the discovery of IRA plots to devastate London with lorry bombs.

But their approach was thrown into confusion when it was disclosed that the former Cabinet minister Tony Benn had joined Mr Corbyn in booking a Commons room for today's "private meeting".

Party sources refused to say

whether the punishment threatened for Mr Corbyn would also apply to Mr Benn, who intends to go to the meeting. "We are awaiting developments," an official said. "We have expressed the anger of the leadership and we will now see what happens."

Leadership sources had said that Mr Corbyn would lose the whip next month if he went ahead with today's meeting. Ultimately, that could mean that he would not be able to defend his Islington North constituency for Labour at the general election.

Mr Blair and Mr Dewar seized the opportunity to discipline Mr Corbyn, whose activities have often embarrassed the party. But they were unaware of Mr Benn's in-

volvement when they issued their threat. While Mr Corbyn is a relatively easy target, Mr Benn is not and the leadership would be loath to become embroiled in a battle with such a senior figure, still popular on the Left.

Last night the leadership was clinging to the hope that the visit would be called off, although senior Sinn Fein sources said they had no reason to believe that that was the case and Mr Corbyn was reported to be determined that it should go ahead. He said nothing would be achieved by "driving the IRA further into their bunker".

Last week the House authorities banned Mr Adams from holding a press conference to publicise his new autobiography, since Commons rules prevent rooms being used for commercial promotions. But Mr Corbyn — and Mr Benn, as it turned out — helped Mr Adams to get round that by organising today's "private meeting". There is no bar on any member of the public going to Westminster to meet an MP.

Mr Dewar, who told Mr Corbyn last week not to sponsor or a press conference for Mr Adams, said that the plan was "a clear breach of the spirit of the advice given to him and a defiance of the steps taken by the House authorities". It was, Mr Dewar said, "particularly reprehensible in the light of recent events involving the IRA. If he persists it will be a matter for disciplinary action within the party".

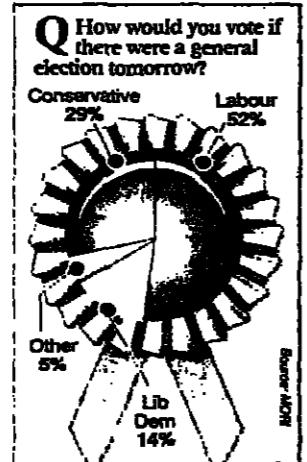
Mr Adams denied yesterday that it was insensitive of him to visit Westminster just as the IRA was suspected of planning a new bombing campaign on mainland Britain. Launching his book, *Before the Dawn*, in west Belfast, he said: "I resent very much British politicians coming here. But I go to London not to be dictating to British people how they should live their lives, not to be interfering. Continued on page 2, col 6

Tories' recovery in polls falters

By PETER RIDDELL

THE Tories' recovery in the polls has stalled as Labour consolidates its commanding lead ahead of its annual conference in Blackpool next week, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

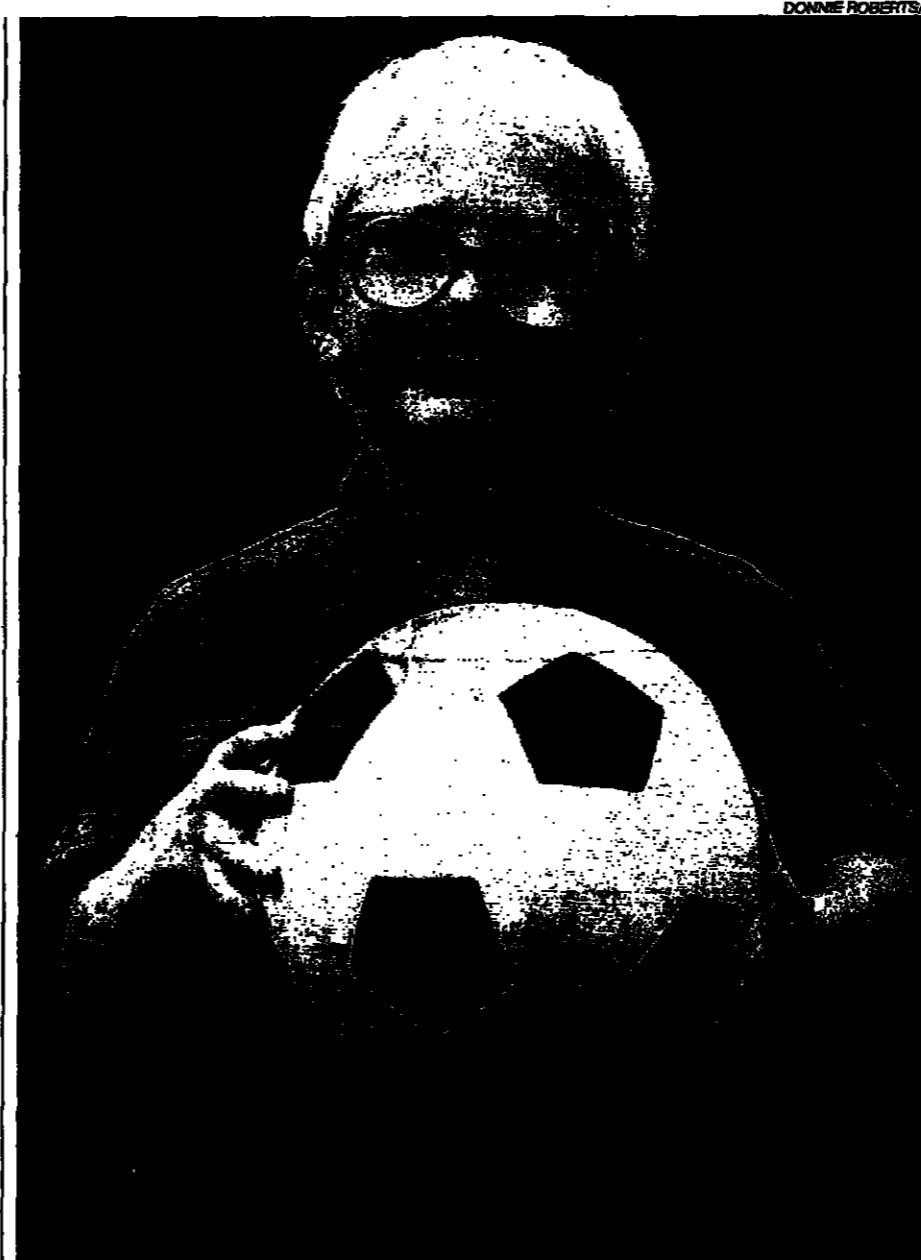
The poll was taken over last weekend as the latest Tory infighting about a European single currency was starting to make a big public impact. The Tories have fallen one percentage point over the past month to 22 per cent. This is the same as in June, though it is four points fewer than earlier this year. Labour leaders are relieved that the gap between them and the Tories, now 23 points, has not narrowed fur-



ther. The Liberal Democrats have edged up a point to 14 per cent, their highest level since May.

MORI interviewed 1,800 adults in 162 sampling points between September 20 and 23. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent), are undecided (9 per cent) or who refused to say (3 per cent).

Leading article, page 19



Johnathan Prevette at home after being suspended for kissing a classmate

Boy, 6, learns price of a kiss

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A SIX-YEAR-OLD boy has been disciplined by his North Carolina primary school for placing an affectionate peck on the cheek of a girl in his class.

Johnathan Prevette, from Lexington, kissed the unnamed girl as a sign of affection, his mother said yesterday. It earned him a rebuke for sexual harassment, and a day's exclusion.

He missed an ice-cream and fizzy drink's party and a colouring lesson because he had been invited to go to good conduct in school. The controversial kiss was bestowed at the end of a cleaning-up session in which the two children had been tidying their classroom.

"A six-year-old kissing

another six-year-old is inappropriate behaviour," said Jane Martin for the local school district. "Unwelcome means unwelcome at any age." The code was to prevent "an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment".

The kiss was seen by a teacher who submitted a report to the school principal, Lisa Horne. Inquiries were made and Johnathan's action was deemed to have contravened the school's code against "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature". The code is part of a fat book of school rules.

Jackie Prevette, mother of Johnathan, said that it was impossible for the six-year-old to grasp the concept of sexual harassment. It was the first time Johnathan had been in trouble, but he was put in detention for the day.

Mrs Prevette said: "The principal asked the little girl if she had asked Johnathan to kiss her. The little girl said no. Of course, I was a six-year-old I'd be scared to death."

The mother added: "Johnathan understands he kissed a little girl; and they go into trouble for it. But that's about it. This makes children wonder 'should I hug somebody? It's no wonder we have all these people with behaviour problems.'"

Mrs Prevette argued that Jackie Prevette said that it was impossible for the six-year-old to grasp the concept of sexual harassment. It was the first time Johnathan had been in trouble, but he was put in detention for the day.

Continued on page 2, col 8

Professor's first editions end up in the dustcart

By ROBIN YOUNG

A LEADING literary critic has mistakenly consigned his collection of books and papers to a municipal dustman.

Sir Frank Kermode, former King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University, mistook Cambridge dustmen for removal men while he was moving house in May. He did not realise what was happening to his first editions, volumes with personal dedications and

irreplaceable manuscripts until about 30 boxes had been thrown into the dustcart and crushed by its compactor.

Now Sir Frank, who will be 77 in November, is claiming £20,000 compensation, alleging that many of the books and manuscripts in the dustcart were so thoroughly crushed that some have been irretrievably lost and others irreparably damaged.

The academic showed three council dustmen, who had been asked to make a special waste collection, into a room

at the house he was leaving and indicated a large collection of boxes which he wanted removed. When he realised where the boxes had gone, he asked the men to retrieve them from the cart, but they said they could not for safety reasons.

Instead, the cart was taken to a depot and unloaded. Arthur Savage, support services manager in Cambridge council finance department, said yesterday: "We still have the boxes at a depot and we are waiting for Sir Frank to collect them. We are contesting Sir Frank's claim for compensation because we do not believe we did anything wrong."

"They were clearly identified as city council employees and how they could be thought to be removal men I just do not know. They were there by prior arrangement. Once it was realised they had been mistaken for removal men, they could not go back into the vehicle to rescue the professor's belongings because you cannot crawl into a compacting machine."

How to become a freelance writer

By NICK DAWES

Freelance writing can be creative, fulfilling and a lot of fun, with excellent money to be made as well. What's more, anyone can become a writer. No special qualifications or experience are required.

The market for writers is huge. In Britain alone there are around 1,000 daily, Sunday and weekly papers, and more than 8,000 magazines.

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With such demand, there's always room for new writers. But as Mr. E. H. Metcalfe, principal of Britain's leading writing school, The Writers Bureau, explains, "If you want to enjoy the rewards of seeing your work in print, one thing you must have is proper training."

The Writers Bureau, explains,

"If you want to enjoy the rewards of seeing your work in print, one thing you must have is proper training."

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Lunchless Liberals make a meal of their deepest principles

Our causes rouse special passion in a Liberal breast. One is local government. They really care about pavement politics and their voice in town halls nationwide is jealously guarded.

Another is disability. To a Liberal Democrat, if the struggle is not about protecting the disadvantaged, it is about nothing.

The third is race. Liberals will bend over backward to show consideration to anyone from a minority ethnic group.

The fourth cause is more selfish: every Liberal's

ceaseless search for free food. Some never enter the conference hall but spend their days wandering like buffalo over the African plain, from nosh to nosh. A foodless debate risks an empty room.

Hold in your mind those four great goals: pavement politics, anti-racism, pro-disability and free nosh. A clash within Liberal democracy between any two of these impulses would bring turmoil. A clash between all four would be emotional agony.

The pain this caused them was pitiful to observe.

But to begin at the beginning... the Urban Campaign Network plus bearded Tony Greaves, old fashioned liberal and famous wild man of the local government undergrowth, had fronted a lunchtime fringe entitled: "Why We Don't Want To Get Into Bed With Labour". The aim was to marshall opposition to Mr Ashdown's rumoured plans to cuddle up to a Blair government. Many Liberal Demo-

crats in local government believe that to get "hitched up" (as Greaves put it) with Labour would wreck the party's foundations.

"A meeting for all activists who don't see Labour through rose-tinted spectacles!" said the handout. Greaves, a canny old owl, knew the topic was hot and saw his chance to save money on sausage rolls, so (in smaller print) dismayed delegates read from within" and everyone cheered. "Don't sell the faith!" shouted one councillor, and they cheered some more. "Labour will naff up, make no mistakes!" yelled another.

Fighting the urge to graze at a rival meeting — "energy

from waste (free refreshments!)" — scores turned up. They were in a mood to kill.

They think Ashdown is plotting to sell their heritage for a mess of Blairite potage. As the meeting progressed they grew angrier. "I don't like the word 'consensus'; I prefer 'suspicion!'" barked an Islington lady councillor. Greaves told them Labour was "rotting

delegates from within" and everyone cheered. "Don't sell the faith!" shouted one councillor, and they cheered some more. "Labour will naff up, make no mistakes!" yelled another.

supporting whoops. Then an articulate, young black delegate rose. Paddy was right, he said, to think about a pact. There was a confused growl from the floor. "Careerist!" shouted someone. "Are we serious about power?" demanded the youth. "Rubbish!" shouted someone else.

"We may need to deal with Labour."

"Join'n then!" "Turn off the TV cameras!" "He only came for the TV!" Soon the black man was being barracked on all sides. He found himself in a

smaller minority than the ethnic one. A minority of two, as it turned out, for now a man arose, a thoughtful man, with a stammer. "To be fair to Labour..." he began. "Why?" shouted someone. Soon, hindered by his stammer, he too was being interrupted cruelly.

These gentle people became like wild beasts. As I left, the black man was being attacked on the stairs. Someone was jabbing a finger at his chest shouting: "People like you..." and then, "Ow much did Paddy pay you?"

I ran for cover.

European Court's decision seen as green light for evictions

Gypsy must stop living in caravan on her own land

BY FRANCES GIBB AND IAN MURRAY

A GYPSY faces prosecution and eviction after the European Court of Human Rights ruled yesterday that she could not legally stay in her caravan on her own land.

June Buckley, 32, had appealed against her local council's refusal to grant planning permission for her family to live in three caravans on land she owns in Willingham, Cambridgeshire. But the court in Strasbourg backed South Cambridgeshire District Council's stance in a ruling that is being seen as a landmark decision on gypsy rights. Mrs Buckley had argued that by refusing planning permission the council was denying her traditional gypsy rights. But the court said the council's decision was justified in the interests of the protection of the rights of others.

Kathleen Crandall, the council's legal and housing officer, said staff would now be under pressure to enforce their ruling. That could initially mean prosecution and then possible eviction.

Mrs Buckley, who has lived illegally on the land with her three children for eight years, has refused offers of a place on a nearby local authority gypsy site. She said she planned to

continue the fight to stay in her caravans, which planning officials say are eyesores.

Some 15 gypsies, including one of Mrs Buckley's neighbours, have similar cases to be heard. Gypsy leaders estimate that between 300 and 400 gypsies are illegally living on their own land throughout Britain. They now fear that councils across the country will take the European Court's decision as a green light to press ahead with evictions.

Mrs Buckley said yesterday: "I am disappointed but I didn't pin too much hope on it because we have had so many disappointments. I have got nowhere else to go. I am not going on the site, so there is only one way and that is to carry on."

Mrs Crandall said that Mrs Buckley had exhausted various appeals. "I do feel our priority now is to help her find somewhere else," she added.

"Mrs Buckley has had a long run without planning permission and understandably villagers in Willingham will now be expecting us to enforce our decision."

The council said it had an excellent record on giving planning permission to gypsies and dismissed any suggestion of discrimination.

Eli Frankham, president of the Romani Rights Association, said the court's ruling was bad news for many gypsies who did not want to live on council sites but wanted to settle on their own land.

"People don't want to stay on council sites because all too often there are youngsters causing running riot there and trouble. Gypsies today cannot travel around in the way they used to, because they get moved on after a few days. Now people want a base where they can live on their own land and have their children educated."

Luke Clements, Mrs Buckley's solicitor, said the court had judged the case on the basis of a complaint made in 1991, when the law covering campsites for travellers was different. Since then the 1994 Criminal Justice Act has removed the duty on local authorities to provide camp sites and has criminalised camping on waste ground. There are at least 15 cases waiting to go to Strasbourg based on these issues and we are confident of winning them."

He said Mrs Buckley still had a Court of Appeal hearing pending on her own case.



June Buckley, who has been told she must move

VOGUE THE BIG NAMES

Go to the Paris fashion shows with **Ruby Wax** Have lunch with **Sandra Bullock** Get dressed with **Donna Karan** Go backstage with **John Galliano**

BE ACTIVE WITH OCTOBER VOGUE

Courts martial changes not enough, judges told

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

PROPOSED reforms of courts martial in Britain would not end the unfairness of the system, judges at the European Court of Human Rights were told today. Revised procedures, designed to reinforce the independence of the military courts, will come into force in April. But that would not help Alexander Findlay, his lawyer, John Mackenzie, told the judges in Strasbourg.

Mr Findlay, 35, was court-martialed in 1991 after taking army colleagues hostage at gunpoint during a tour of duty in Northern Ireland. He was suffering post-traumatic stress disorder after serving in the Falklands War.

He did not attend the hearing yesterday because he is still traumatised. Mr Mackenzie told the court that the former soldier had been denied a fair hearing before an independent and impartial tribunal, as required by the Convention on Human Rights

to which Britain is a signatory. He urged the judges not only to find the Government in violation of the convention but to award substantial compensation to Mr Findlay.

The case is the first in a series of attempts by army and RAF personnel to have the courts-martial system scrapped as a breach of human rights. If the judges back Mr Findlay, the Ministry of Defence could face dozens of compensation claims and a bill for millions of pounds, even though significant changes have already received Royal Assent and take effect on April 1 next year.

Mr Findlay, a former Scots Guardsman living in Windsor, pleaded guilty at his court martial and was jailed for two years. He threatened other members of his unit, firing two shots, after a heavy drinking session. He also threatened to kill himself. The soldier was jailed despite psychiatric evidence that he had been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder at the time.

Mr Mackenzie said that the current courts-martial procedure could not be deemed a properly constituted court with appropriately trained officials having legal qualifications or experience. Decision-making members of courts-martial had minimal or no legal expertise and record-keeping was "rudimentary and haphazard".

Philip Havers, QC, for the Government, told the court that the new system would be very different. He emphasised that there would always be a need for special arrangements for the Armed Forces.

Mr Findlay has already received £100,000 from the Ministry of Defence after a civil action alleging negligence in failing to treat his post-traumatic stress. Judgment will be given next year.

Price of kiss

Continued from page 1
the rules on sexual harassment should apply only to older children. The case threatened the innocence of young America. She added: "I don't want other kids to have to go through this."

No comment was forthcoming from the school's authorities yesterday. As for the offender, he seemed to have overcome the upset. Asked if he intended to go on hugging people, he said: "Yep. Sure!"

It was only a matter of time before primary schools in Britain had to draw up rules defining decent conduct, a teacher union said yesterday (David Charter writes).

Some recent high-profile cases of disruptive infants were fuelled by playground jealousies over relationships, said Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmarmers Union of Women Teachers.

But none of the main teachers unions has had to advise members on how to keep amorous infants apart. The Education Department knew of no cases where a primary school child had been expelled for kissing a classmate.

MP with penchant for provocation

BY JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

JEREMY CORBYN, the left-wing MP who has been criticised by the Labour leadership for organising a Commons visit for Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president, is nothing if not persistent.

Elected MP for Islington North in June 1993, one of the first things he did was to invite Mr Adams to visit Parliament. Mr Adams had been elected as MP for West Belfast at the same time, but refused to take his seat.

Since then, Mr Corbyn has invited a range of other Sinn Fein supporters and IRA sympathisers to the Commons. Each time he has been reprimanded by the Labour leadership but he has never had the Whip withdrawn.

In autumn 1993, Mr Corbyn tried but failed to secure permission for Mr Adams to speak on the fringe of Labour's annual conference. The next year, he invited two republican spokesmen to

speak at the Commons. The move, which came only two weeks after the Brighton bombing, provoked a rebuke from the then Labour Chief Whip, Michael Cocks. Mr Corbyn was remonstrant, saying he believed that "any MP who wishes to meet people who have points of view to raise must have the right to do that".

Mr Adams, who refused to take his seat at Westminster when he was MP for West Belfast between 1983 and 1992, said that he had spoken to Labour and Conservative MPs at Westminster in the past. "My engagement is with Jeremy Corbyn. I will be there in the House of Commons. I understand, for reasons that I am not entirely au fait with,

that the press conference has been proscribed."

While the Labour leadership has dissociated the whole party from the proposed visit, Mr Corbyn was defended by his Labour colleague David Winnick last night. Mr Winnick, who is vice-chairman of the British Irish Parliamentary body, said: "I support him right to hold the meeting but would urge him to engage in tough talking as the prospect of a united Ireland is even more remote than at any time in the last 25 years."

MP faces expulsion

Continued from page 1
with their Government or with society there, but to try and inform public opinion to the situation here."

Mr Adams, who refused to take his seat at Westminster when he was MP for West Belfast between 1983 and 1992, said that he had spoken to Labour and Conservative MPs at Westminster in the past. "My engagement is with Jeremy Corbyn. I will be there in the House of Commons. I understand, for reasons that I am not entirely au fait with,

voted Mr Adams to the Commons to help him launch another book. Although Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, banned Mr Adams from launching the book, he was permitted to talk about the peace process.

Mr Corbyn has also angered the Labour leadership by sharing platforms with Sinn Fein supporters. He has participated in marches calling for British troops to be pulled out of Northern Ireland and in 1988, he shared a platform with Richard McAuley, a Sinn Fein spokesman, to commemorate the death of the IRA hunger-strike Bobby Sands.

He has also been a fierce critic of Tony Blair's bipartisan approach to the Northern Ireland peace process. Despite Mr Corbyn's undoubted sincerity in his support of the republican movement, it also reflects the sympathies of some of his constituents. Islington North has one of the highest numbers of Irish-born residents.

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Bury St Edmunds

Fashion queen's young rivals underdress to impress at opening of London fashion week



Antonio Berardi teased with diaphanous designs

Westwood announces return to London catwalk

By GRACE BRADBERRY
STYLE EDITOR

THE grande dame of British design, Vivienne Westwood, announced yesterday that she would be showing her collections in England for the first time in a decade as London Fashion Week opened with a stunning show by a rising star.

Westwood's change of heart may have been helped by the appearance of designers such as Antonio Berardi, 27, who yesterday seemed to be reaching for her crown as he showed a dazzling and outrageous spring/summer collection in the Crush Bar of the Royal Opera House.

A visible panty line, the *belle noir* of well-dressed women, was a feature of his collection with knickers in contrasting colours beneath diaphanous mini-dresses. One dress was so mini that it ended at waist level at the back and was worn with no knickers at all.

Berardi, who graduated from St Martin's School of Art in 1994, echoed Westwood's style with corset dresses and a mini-crinoline worn over pedal-pushers. For the finale she showed an enormous black chiffon feathered hat with a black and purple mini-dress.

The fashion world appeared to love Berardi's bordello glamour. The front row was packed with key figures from the industry, including Mario Testino, the photographer of the moment. Some rose from their seats to give



Westwood: linked with French couture house

Berardi a standing ovation as he emerged at the end of the show on the arm of the model Honor Fraser.

Westwood, 55, who made her name as the Queen of Punk in the 1970s, announced that from next March she would show her demi-couture collection in Paris, her menswear in Milan and her Red Label ready-to-wear collection in London.

Her return is another sign that British fashion, and with it London, is undergoing a renaissance. John Rocha and Katharine Hamnett, who abandoned London for a few seasons, have also returned.

Still overseas is John Galliano, currently the de-

signer of Givenchy. Westwood had been tipped to follow his lead and take over a French couture house, Christian Dior, after the departure of the Italian designer Gianfranco Ferré next month.

Yesterday's announcement fuelled that speculation. Did Westwood's decision mean that she was trying to re-establish herself as a shockingly original Brit to sway the decision-makers at Dior? Or did it mean that the job had gone elsewhere and she was moving in a new direction?

Half the fashion world believes that Westwood will get the job, the other half believes that it has gone to Galliano, who will move from Givenchy to Dior. In a game of fashion musical chairs, another Briton, Alexander McQueen, would be the favourite for the Givenchy job. McQueen made his name with daring "bumster" trousers.

Whatever happens at Dior, there are plenty of other young Turks besides McQueen snapping at Westwood's heels. Other designers showing yesterday included Ronit Zilkha, a favourite of Cherrie Booth, who offered citrus-coloured shorts, tops and shift-dresses and more conservative beige and brown suits. Tanya Sarnie of Ghost showed a new line called Saraph, which included long white dresses with a tie-dye-style blue print.

Leading article, page 19



Berardi's "bordello glamour" on display yesterday

Vicar jailed for abusing girl who sought help

By PAUL WILKINSON

A VICAR was jailed yesterday for sexually assaulting a schoolgirl who turned to him for comfort after a previous indecent assault. John Poole looked stunned as Judge Norman Jones QC, told him that although he was of previously outstanding character and had devoted his life to the Church, he could not overlook the seriousness of the assault.

Bradford Crown Court was told that the 15-year-old girl had been sent to Mr Jones, vicar of St Paul's Church in Shipley, west Yorkshire, for counselling after she was sexually assaulted while at a youth camp.

Under the guise of confirmation classes, Poole, 50, had met the girl on a one-to-one basis. The vicar, who is married with four adult children, pleaded guilty to indecent assault in May 1995. He was jailed for four months.

Michael Bosomworth, for the prosecution, said: "It is not entirely clear what sort of relationship was built up over this period, but it seems to have been a close one. Hugs seem to have been exchanged. Regrettably matters proceeded further."

Poole said that overwork had played a part in the assault, and that he could not understand how it had happened. He told police: "It was as if I was falling into a well."

Roger Thomas, for the defence, said that Poole had left the Church. His wife was standing by him.

Duchess may face questions in court on her private life

By PETER FOSTER

THE Duchess of York faces the prospect of having to answer questions in court about her private life as she tries to ban a book containing details of her relationship with John Bryan, her former financial adviser.

The Duchess has been told to find £500,000 within two weeks to pay into court as security after a judge ruled that the dispute over the publication of *Fergie: Her Secret Life* should be settled in a High Court trial. The book, by Allan Starkie, Mr Bryan's former close friend and business partner, is thought to cover the Yorks' separation, the Duchess's relationship with Mr Bryan, her financial difficulties, and her many schemes to raise money to support her high-spending way of life.

Lawyers acting for the Duchess successfully applied for an injunction against the book last month after Michael O'Mara Books Ltd announced they had signed a deal with Dr Starkie, a former captain in US Army intelligence. Yesterday, after more than four days of legal argument behind closed doors at the High Court, Mr Justice Astil ruled that the injunction should remain in force pending a full trial, to open on October 7. The Duchess could be called to give evidence in person.

The Duchess, who was not in court, was told she must put

up £500,000 by the trial date as security for any damages that might be won by Dr Starkie and Michael O'Mara Books Ltd if she loses the case. Lawyers for O'Mara Books said they would immediately apply for the injunction to be lifted if the Duchess who has been rumoured to be several millions of pounds in debt, did not produce the cash.

If the Duchess fails, she would also be left with a large legal bill. Mr O'Mara, who also published Andrew Morton's bestselling book *Diana: Her True Story*, said outside the High Court yesterday that he expected the Duchess to give evidence at the hearing. He added that she would have

The Duchess is to publish her own memoirs in November after signing a reputed £1 million deal with the American publishers Simon and Schuster. She has promised that nothing she writes will embarrass the Royal Family.

Mr O'Mara added that the injunction would not prevent the book being published abroad. Lawyers for the Duchess refused to comment yesterday on any of the events surrounding the case, but it is understood that they are arguing that Dr Starkie has breached confidentiality agreements between himself and the Duchess.

A friend of the Duchess said she was keen to pursue the matter and would find the required £500,000 if that was necessary to continue her case. The sources added: "This has nothing to do with the Duchess trying to promote her own book. The Simon and Schuster book will succeed regardless of other competitors. This is about the legal matter of holding people to confidentiality agreements made between them."



The front cover of the disputed book

Box of chocolates led to job transfer

By CLAIRE WHITE

A BT executive was transferred from his post after sending a woman colleague a box of chocolates as a Christmas present. Yvonne Laurie complained to her bosses of "unwanted attention".

Miss Laurie, 26, also complained that Anthony Manning, 36, had tried to "re-establish a friendship" with her by sending an electronic message to her computer at work on an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

Four months after leaving the chocolates, Mr Manning, from Shoddy, Suffolk, was moved from his job as team leader researching electronic messaging systems for BT in Ipswich. The married father of two, who earns more than £30,000 a year, was transferred to a new post at the BT research station six miles away in Martlesham.

His managers later admitted the transfer was because of his "perceived harassment" of Miss Laurie, the tribunal in

Dismissed gamekeeper loses appeal

By RICHARD DUCE

A GAMEKEEPER lost his claim for unfair dismissal yesterday after complaints that he ruined the shooting for wealthy clients on an estate.

David Baker, acting for Howard Green, 33, the gamekeeper, said after the tribunal ruling in Exeter: "It just goes to show the way of the country is still ruled by the big house, and people who work in the country are just served."

The tribunal had been told by Major Randolph Rayner, 61, owner of the Ashcombe estate in Devon, that Mr Green's behaviour had become intolerable after he appeared on a BBC documentary in 1994.

Brian Walton, the tribunal chairman, said Major Rayner had cause to complain about the running of the shoot although there was evidence of a conspiracy to sack Mr Green. The tribunal held that Major Rayner acted fairly because he reasonably believed there had been miscon-

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THE ENERGY TO BREAK THROUGH



Suspected terrorist in custody in London thought to be associate of IRA chief of staff

O'Neill was wanted for Dockland bomb attack

BY AUDREY MAGEE

DIARMUID O'NEILL, the IRA suspect shot dead by police on Monday, was wanted in connection with the Docklands bomb in east London which ended the 17-month paramilitary ceasefire, according to Gardai sources yesterday.

Senior Irish police in Cork said that O'Neill, 27, was recognised as a significant figure in the IRA six months ago. Irish and British police became aware of him in 1988 when he embezzled £75,000 from a Bank of Ireland branch in London, lodging £40,000 in a Dublin bank account for the IRA. He faded into the background after serving six months of a one-year sentence.

O'Neill again became the focus of police attention during investigations into the Docklands bomb in February in which two people died. Police believe that O'Neill was involved in planting the bomb and had been seeking him in connection with this and other IRA attacks.

He shared his one-bedroom flat, which overlooks Hammersmith police station in west London, with a Spanish girlfriend called Karmele Ereno, the company that manages the property said. Señora Ereno was a previous tenant and continued a relationship



O'Neill, who could trace his republican lineage back to Domhnall Ó Buachalla and Easter 1916

with O'Neill after he took the tenancy.

Police sources said O'Neill was recruited by the IRA in London. From the age of 15 he sold *An Phoblacht*, Republican News, in pubs in Kilburn and Cricklewood, northwest London suburbs with sizeable Irish communities.

Meanwhile, one man in police custody in London is believed to be an associate of a man from the Republic of Ireland reputed to be the IRA chief of staff. According to a report in the *Irish Times*, the man in custody comes from Co Fermanagh. Five years ago he moved to County Monaghan, the home of the IRA chief of staff. Police said that he was in regular contact with O'Neill and was

about eight weeks in west Cork during the summer. Police sources said he made several brief visits to Ireland, spending most of his time with his parents.

Meantime, one man in police custody in London is believed to be an associate of a man from the Republic of Ireland reputed to be the IRA chief of staff. According to a report in the *Irish Times*, the man in custody comes from Co Fermanagh. Five years ago he moved to County Monaghan, the home of the IRA chief of staff. Police said that he was in regular contact with O'Neill and was

implicated in a number of robberies in Co Fermanagh in the late 1980s.

The republican influence that turned O'Neill into a suspected IRA volunteer stretches back to the 1916 Easter Rising in which his reputed great-uncle took part. Friends of the O'Neills in Cork say they talk proudly of Domhnall Ó Buachalla, a member of the first Dail Eireann (Irish Parliament).

O'Neill's paternal grandmother was related to O Buachalla, who was a member of the Irish Volunteers, the forerunners of the IRA.

O Buachalla, who died in 1963, led a detachment of Volunteers from his home in Maynooth, Co Kildare, into action in Dublin. After being interned for his part in the rising he was elected as Sinn Féin MP for Kildare in the 1918 general election in which the party won well over 50 per cent of the vote in Ireland. As a republican he refused to take his seat at Westminster and sat in what Sinn Féin called the first Dail Eireann in 1919.

O Buachalla opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 which divided Ireland, and supported the irregulars, the anti-Treaty IRA activists, during the Irish civil war between 1922-23. He was a friend of Eamon de Valera, the Repub-

lic's former Prime Minister and President, with whom he founded the Fianna Fail party in the late 1920s.

At De Valera's request, O Buachalla served as Governor-General between 1932-37 when the newly-independent Irish Free State was nominally a British dominion. O Buachalla did not reside at the vice-regal lodge, but in a house in south Dublin and commuted on a bicycle.

Diarmuid O'Neill, whose

family origins lie in the republican-steeped history of west Cork but who spent his life in west London, also seems to have regarded the Provisional IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands as a hero.

Sands, the gunman who won the Fermanagh and South Tyrone by-election in 1981, died shortly afterwards in the Maze prison after having refused to sanction food and medical intervention for 66 days.

Police sources maintain the police action was justified. O'Neill was unarmed when he was hit by six bullets.

Dr John Burton, coroner for west London, opened and adjourned the inquest into O'Neill's death after announcing that the evidence would have to be considered by a jury. O'Neill died after police raids in London that yielded more than ten tons of home-made explosives.

Dr Burton said he was also waiting to find out what the family wanted. One message suggested they wanted to take the body to Ireland for burial but another from the family's solicitors, Birnberg & Co, asked if Dr Burton's officers could retain the body for a second post-mortem examination.

An independent investigation into the shooting will be held by the Police Complaints Authority. Between 15 and 20 armed officers were involved in the raid on a guesthouse in Glenethorne Road, Hammersmith, west London, where O'Neill was staying. All the officers were warned beforehand that they could face armed terrorists at the address and it would be the most

dangerous assignment of the various raids. The officer who opened fire on O'Neill was a constable with the Yard's SO19 specialist firearms unit. He believed that O'Neill was about to threaten his life and the lives of other officers he had. He and all the other officers have made statements about the shooting and been offered legal advice by the Police Federation.

Yesterday the five men arrested during the raids were still being questioned by anti-terrorist branch officers at Paddington Green police station as police were given an extension to hold them under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for a further 72 hours. One of them is O'Neill's brother Shane. Diarmuid was living above a shop in Fulham Palace Road, a quarter of a mile from the guesthouse where he died.

As Father Malachy Loughran, a local priest, described how the O'Neill family had been well known in the area, there were fears that Diarmuid O'Neill's death would be exploited. Already a picket has been mounted by 30 members of Fascaill, the Irish Political Prisoners Campaign, at Paddington Green police station.

The group, which says it takes advice from Sinn Féin, is protesting about an alleged "shoot to kill" policy by the Government.



O'Neill's flat, the top two windows above the bookmakers, which overlooked Hammersmith police station

Family may want an independent post-mortem

BY STAFF REPORTERS

THE family of Diarmuid O'Neill are considering a second independent post-mortem examination, it emerged yesterday as republican groups began questioning the circumstances of the shooting.

Police sources maintain the police action was justified. O'Neill was unarmed when he was hit by six bullets.

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We don't want to say, in the middle of the fish course, 'Go and move the car'

Drive feud drove neighbours to court

By RICHARD DUCE

RETIREMENT for a former Cambridge professor and his wife passed in rural tranquillity for almost a decade until a family doctor and his children moved in next door.

Jasper and Jean Rose had always parked their Volkswagen in the courtyard outside the front door of their converted mansion house home. All that changed when James Hampton bought the £300,000 conversion next door at the mansion near Trowbridge, Wiltshire, and with it the ownership of the 200-yard driveway, Bristol County Court was told:

Until then Professor Rose, 66, and his wife Jean were content to entertain friends and play the piano in the music room. Apart from her painting Mrs Rose also enjoyed being able to sweep up the drive in her car and park outside the front door.

Dr Hampton decided that the Roses should no longer park outside their own front door on the driveway because it blocked his view of the surrounding countryside.

The lengthy dispute that followed over who should be allowed to park where descended into allegation of rudeness against the three young Hampton children and claims that the doctor chopped back the Roses' beech hedge.

Professor Rose went on to claim that cars were deliberately boxed in and loud music



Dr Hampton and his wife Jacqueline, left, arriving at court yesterday, and the Roses outside their home. They moved to the country for the peace

led him to call in environmental health officers.

Eventually he issued a writ

against Dr Hampton, a GP in Bath, which led the two men to the County in Bristol where, after two days of argument, they decided to settle. Details of the agreement were not released but it is understood that Dr Hampton will allow Professor Rose to park on the drive when it is "reasonably necessary".

Judge Weeks, QC, told them: "I am glad you have eventually reached agreement between yourselves."

The Roses moved to Wingfield House, a Grade II building, in 1986 when Profes-

sor Rose returned from working at the University of California. He left his Cambridge professorship in 1963.

He told the court: "I moved there because it was out in the country and quite peaceful. But how pleased we were that the house next door was going to be occupied. Children always smile and laugh and say amusing and funny things — but they said some very rude things to me."

Things deteriorated badly. We had two elderly ladies to lunch, both widows. One was not well. They had parked outside our front door. During the course of lunch Dr Hampton rang up and spoke to my

wife. Our guests left and as they left he came out and shouted at my wife. I cannot say that we have enjoyed good relations since then."

Charles Auld, for the Hamptons, asked Professor Rose if he behaved as if he was the lord of the manor. He replied: "I am astonished. I don't think that I am the lord of the manor. It is not a manor house and I spent a lot of time in the USA."

Professor Rose also rejected a compromise where he was allowed to park for an hour to unload and load his car. "We need to come and go without this timetable. A timetable of that kind is quite unsuitable

for a place like this. When we have people to dinner, we don't want the moment that they arrive — scantily clothed in winter — to have to go and park their car elsewhere. We want to say 'Come in'. We don't want to say, in the middle of the fish course, 'Go and move the car'."

He also claimed that Dr Hampton, without permission and while he was on holiday, chopped back his beech hedge, which stretched 80 yards along the drive. "The cutting back of the hedge has been a devastation. I have become friendly towards my hedge. When you look after trees, you begin to feel for them."

After the settlement, Dr Hampton said: "We want to sell the property but how could we when someone is effectively parking in your front garden? When he parked in front of our house, he blocked our view from the kitchen window. How would you like a car parked outside your house all the time?"

"As to destroying his hedge, it was growing onto our land and becoming a menace. We had to cut it back. We are saddened that this came to court. We have settled with goodwill on both sides. We remain on good terms with our neighbours."



Hill is caught on video as he plays for his team

Video shots cost cheat his big score

Troubled police force sacks sex case officer

By PAUL WILKINSON

A POLICEMAN has been sacked for improper behaviour at the same police station where sexual harassment of a woman officer cost their force £165,000 compensation.

The uniformed constable, based at Harrogate, was ordered to resign after an internal disciplinary hearing found him guilty on four charges, including harassing women colleagues.

A spokesman for the North Yorkshire force said yesterday that there was no connection with the case of Libby Ashurst, 27, the detective constable whose career was ruined by harassment from some of her male colleagues in the Harrogate CID office. In a related case, PC Amanda Rose received more than £10,000.

Last night a North Yorkshire Police spokesman said that details of the charges and penalties were only for the officer involved and the disciplinary panel.

It is understood that the 32-year-old officer, who lives in Knaresborough, was dismissed after complaints from three women officers about his behaviour, in particular the derogatory way the PC referred to them.

Their complaints were heard personally by David Burke, the Chief Constable, who found all four charges proved and asked for the PC's resignation.

A MAN who won £11,000 damages by fraudulently claiming he tripped on a defective pavement has been ordered to pay the money back after he was filmed playing football.

Peter Hill, 30, was also told to pay £1,100 interest to Liverpool City Council. Hill, of Netherley, Liverpool, was awarded the money in March last year after convincing Liverpool County Court he had damaged a knee. But the council decided to trap him on video and apply for the case to be retried when his name appeared as a goalscorer for his Sunday team in the local paper.

Judge Hamilton said: "There used to be a gibe 'drink is the ruin of the working classes' but now it might be said 'the video is the ruin of the cheating classes.'"

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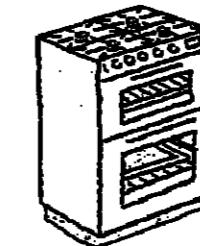
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Gang fight was to be a laugh, says boy witness

By JOANNA BALE

A SCHOOLBOY played truant to take part in a gang fight that allegedly led to the murder of the headmaster Philip Lawrence because he heard it would be a "laugh", the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

"I thought if I lagged along,

it might be funny. I did not really want to stay at school that day," said the boy, now 16. He had played truant from his North London school after being approached in the playground by a friend accompanied by another boy he did not know but who had a Chinese tattoo on his left hand.

The schoolboy witness was described in court by John Bevan, the prosecutor, as courageous for agreeing to give evidence against the gang. Describing himself as an occasional truant, the boy said he met the gang members at a Burger King restaurant in Euston — a regular meeting place for gang members.

There he met the 16-year-old boy who is now accused of murdering Mr Lawrence and who he knew to be the gang-leader. Mr Bevan asked him: "What was your understanding of what was going to happen?" He replied: "Just a playground fight really."

At the restaurant he was

shown a metal bar in a sport's bag carried by his friend in the gang. "It was black, about 30 to 40cm long... it looked like a gearstick for a truck."

The schoolboy then described how the gang-leader organised the 11 or 12 members into groups of three. "He put us into groups and told us what we were going there for ... to find a boy to beat up."

The tattooed boy, who was at the time a pupil at Mr Lawrence's school, St George's in Maida Vale, northwest London, told the gang the layout of the school and that the headmaster would be at the front gate. The gang travelled by Tube to the school and as they walked towards it the boy giving evidence told his friend that he wanted to leave because "someone had mentioned something about a gun", which the intended victim's friends were going to bring.

The boy lagged behind the gang to talk to a girl he knew from the school. He turned round at the commotion and saw the iron bar being struck down twice but could not tell who was involved.

He then saw a boy, believed to be the 13-year-old victim run off, followed by members of the gang. He caught up with them and the gang-leader joined them and confessed to stabbing Mr Lawrence.

The older boy denies murder. He and another boy, now 15, also deny conspiring to cause Mr Lawrence grievous bodily harm and wounding him. The case continues.

Howard to press for stalking law in new Bill

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD is to press for laws to outlaw stalking as part of his Criminal Justice Bill to be introduced in the run-up to the next election.

The Home Secretary said yesterday that stalking laws were a high priority and that he would "very much like" legislation on the statute book before May.

He told Radio 4's *Today*: "I have enormous sympathy with the victims of this kind of activity and I have no doubt that we should have a law that gives them proper protection."

Judge Butler, sitting at Southwark Crown Court, called on Tuesday for urgent legislation after Clarence Morris was convicted on assault charges for subjecting Perry Southall, 20, to 200 incidents of harassment. The judge also criticised David Stanton, who defended Morris, for suggesting that Miss Southall brought the situation on herself by dressing like a "queen bee".

The Government has already published a consultation paper proposing two criminal offences and one civil remedy to tackle stalking, but the Home Secretary is likely to press for this to be included in his Criminal Justice Bill, expected to be announced in the Queen's Speech in November.

Mr Howard also distanced himself from the comments of the barrister in Tuesdays case. He said it was "perfectly possible for lawyers to do their duty to their clients in a way that does not bring the justice system into disrepute and I think it is important that that is what happens."

Both the Bar and the Criminal Bar Association yesterday said they would back a new stalking law. David Penry-Davey, QC, chairman of the Bar, said: "We recognise that the current law is inadequate and hope there will be a speedy change in both the civil and criminal law."

He would not comment specifically on the statements

made by Judge Butler, who publicly dissociated himself from the remarks made by Mr Stanton, because if a complaint is lodged the Bar Council would be involved in dealing with it.

Those remarks, as to whether it was fair that "the queen bee attracting the drones ... cries out foul because some body finds her attractive", might have been better not made, the judge said.

But Mr Penry-Davey said that barristers had to observe their professional code of conduct in court, which said that they must not make any statement or ask any question that was intended merely to cheapen, insult or annoy a witness.

Nor could a barrister impugn a witness in a speech to a congregation of more than 650 at St George's Church in Hanover Square, central London, yesterday at a memorial service to honour the life of the soldier, politician, bestselling author and irrepressible adventurer who died in June aged 85, in the mundane circumstances of taking a swim at a friend's house in Hertfordshire.

Being ordered by Churchill to parachute into war-

Maclean when *Eastern Approaches* appeared

Lady Maclean, Sir Fitzroy's widow, is greeted by Winston Churchill, MP, at the memorial service yesterday

SAS men honour all-action founder

By ALAN HAMILTON

HE MAY or may not have been the model for James Bond. But even Fleming's fictional hero would have had difficulty in emulating the catalogue of derring-do that filled the life of Sir Fitzroy Maclean.

Princess Margaret and Princess Alexandra led a congregation of more than 650 at St George's Church in Hanover Square, central London, yesterday at a memorial service to honour the life of the soldier, politician, bestselling author and irrepressible adventurer who died in June aged 85, in the mundane circumstances of taking a swim at a friend's house in Hertfordshire.

Being ordered by Churchill to parachute into war-

time Yugoslavia to make contact with Tito's partisans was only one chapter in a life that included helping to found the SAS, writing the modern travel classic *Eastern Approaches*, and visiting Tibet as an octogenarian crippled with arthritis.

Lady Soames, Churchill's only surviving child, said in an address to the congregation that there was a providence about Sir Fitzroy that had seen him through a life

packed with adventure and danger. "There was a magic that made him accessible to all sorts and conditions of men and women: debutantes, dromedary drivers, statesmen, top service members, partisan fighters, beautiful and clever women, the private soldier and the shepherd on the hills of Strachur [Sir Fitzroy's Scottish home]. Yet with all his approachability he had an intrinsic detachment and reserve, not easy to

penetrate," Lady Soames said.

Members of the SAS, even in retirement, do not often put their heads above the parapet, but they were well represented at the service for one of their distinguished founders: Major General Jeremy Phipps, a former director of the SAS, read the lesson from Psalm 121, much loved by Scots: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills."

And the congregation

found themselves murmuring in prayer the regimental collect of the SAS that includes the words "... grant that the chosen members of the SAS Regiment may by our works and ways dare to win all..."

As Lady Soames said in a final tribute to the most active of men, it is difficult to conceive of Sir Fitzroy in a state of perpetual restfulness.

Memorial service, page 20

Amateur leads archaeologists to site of Wallace's victory

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE remains of Stirling Bridge, where William Wallace defeated the invading English 700 years ago, are believed to have been found by an amateur enthusiast.

Two large stone piers, one visible just a foot below the surface of the River Forth at low tide, have been discovered by Dr Ron Page, a retired lecturer from Stirling University. He used nothing more than a rowing boat, a 10ft

metal probe and a glass-bottomed bucket to view the riverbed in his original investigations.

Yesterday the British Geological Survey used sonar equipment to map the underwater sandbanks to see if more piers were buried there. If they find what they are looking for, a full marine archaeological dig will take place next year.

The exact whereabouts of the ancient bridge, site of one of the most important battles in Scottish history, had been a mystery. The 28ft piers found by Dr Page are thought to be two of eight foundation blocks on to which the original wooden bridge was built, possibly in the year 800.

The bridge is believed to have been destroyed in 1297 by the retreating English to prevent Wallace pursuing them south. The English had an army four times the size of his band of volunteers, but they were resoundingly defeated after being tricked into crossing the narrow bridge two-by-two to attack the Scots on the other side.

Dr Page said: "By then it was already a very old bridge. No one knows who built it or how long it had stood there before it was destroyed. We could solve one of Scotland's historical mysteries."

FBI finds major's body after tip-off

By RICHARD DUCE

THE body of a missing British army officer has been discovered in a remote area of New Mexico, three days after an escaped convict admitted witnessing his murder.

The body of Major David Nichols, 53, was found under rocks and branches close to the village of Villanueva, east of Albuquerque. The FBI said yesterday that it was believed he had been killed by two gunshots to the head.

Earlier this week Roger Yeadon, the convict, said that a fellow escaped prisoner, Michael Thompson, 35, had shot dead Major Nichols during a robbery at a rest-stop on Interstate 25 in May.

Yeadon, 24, refused to say where Major Nichols had been buried. The FBI said the body had been discovered after a tip-off.

Major Nichol, a father of three who was separated from his wife, disappeared while touring the United States before attending a languages conference. His rented car was found in a lake in Indiana on June 22 and Yeadon and Thompson were arrested the following month.

The convicted criminals had escaped after overpowering a deputy sheriff as they were taken to court in Alabama, and stole the officer's shotgun. Yeadon said that the intention had been to rob Major Nichols but that Thompson had opened fire. Yeadon has been charged with stealing the major's car.

Brigadier Allan Thomson, director of Educational and Army Training Services, said: "Major Nichols was a respected and dedicated officer who gave great service to education in the Army, particularly in the field of language training."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Getaway gang take baby in car

A woman was dragged from her car by four men being pursued by police, who then sped off with the woman's two-year-old daughter strapped in her child seat. The car was halted a short distance away after a motorist blocked its path, and the gang fled on foot in the village of Thornton Hough, Merseyside. Two men found hiding in a shed nearby were arrested; two others are being sought. A sock containing jewellery was found near their abandoned car.

£2m win claimed

An anonymous syndicate has claimed a £2 million Irish lottery win, ending weeks of speculation about the winner's identity. The ticket was bought on Achill island on August 27 but was assumed lost, causing hundreds of locals to search for it.

Police bike stolen

Three youths stole a policeman's bicycle after threatening him with a screwdriver. Chief Superintendent John Potts, in charge of the Salford division of Greater Manchester Police, was stopped in Worsley, Greater Manchester, on his way to work.

Vicar charged

An Anglican clergyman appeared at Northampton Magistrates' Court charged with taking nearly £8,000 from church funds. The Rev Martyn Davis, 37, who faces five theft and two deception charges, was granted unconditional bail.

Masked killers

Masked gunmen shot a man dead at a card game and injured two others. Shots were fired after three men burst into a house in Leyton, east London, and ordered one of the players to remove his jewellery. Another man was hit with the butt of a gun.

Teacher accused

A teacher has been suspended after being accused of dangerous use of an air rifle during a physics lesson. The teacher, from Cheltenham Bournside School, Gloucestershire, allegedly used the gun to illustrate a talk on velocity.

EDUCATION

□ Professor Jerzy Wdowczyk (obituary, September 23) is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son; his birthplace was Sosnowica.

□ A Diary item (September 23) on Dr Anne Lee omitted to mention that she was joining Queenswood, the independent girls' school, as a governor.

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Hurd warns Major against 'foolish' rejection of EMU

By ANDREW PIERCE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOUGLAS HURD fuelled the controversy over Europe in the Tory Party yesterday by warning John Major that it would be foolish to rule out membership of a single currency.

In the former Foreign Secretary's most important speech on domestic politics since he left the Cabinet last year, he also warned the Government against trying to ensure a general election victory by cutting taxes at the expense of public services.

Mr Hurd, who was addressing the first conference of the Conservative Mainstream group, urged One Nation Tories to stand up to the Euro-sceptics and to voice support for the Cabinet's stance on the single currency. He was scathing about the quality of debate on Europe. "Not many people believe that Helmut Kohl [the German chancellor] is aiming at the German supremacy



Hurd: criticised
Euro-sceptic absurdities

which eluded Hitler. These and other absurdities are paraded by the enemies of the EU, but commonsense is on our side when we expose them."

The Cabinet was right to keep open the option on a single currency. "It would be clearly foolish now to say that we would not join. No one can tell where the interests of Britain will lie as regards a

single currency in five or six years' time." Mr Hurd privately believes that British entry into monetary union is possible in the lifetime of the next Parliament but suspects that the timescale would slip beyond the proposed start date of January 1, 1999.

He and his supporters fear that the Government's approach to income tax in the run-up to the election would have a more critical impact on the Tories' electoral fortunes than the controversy over Europe. "It would be a great foolishness for Conservatives in this country to promise that we could cut taxes without cutting public spending," he said.

He hoped that Kenneth Clarke would have some leeway for reductions in the Budget. "But I do not believe that elections, whether in Oxfordshire or elsewhere, can be won by reducing income tax against a background of sacked teachers or closed hospital wards." Taxes should be

reduced steadily and to promise anything else would be "incredible and wrong".

In an appeal for an emphasis on "caring Conservatism" Mr Hurd said that the Tories would deserve to lose the election if they embarked on policies, or uttered phrases, which seemed designed to set one part of the nation against another. "We must not, even in our inner-thinking, despair of part of our population as fit only for poverty — or prison."

Tories had a right to expect a blend of imagination and common sense from their leaders, who were entitled to loyalty in return. "The Prime Minister and his colleagues have been true to these principles. It is not enough to give them silent support at a time when the river is deep and turbulent and when we stand on the edge of an election. We need to be active in expressing our own views as to how our party can succeed at the election."

David Howell, chairman of

the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, said that the voice of mainstream Toryism had been drowned out by the Euro-sceptics. "The debate has been entirely hijacked by the vociferous wings of the Party."

Intimate monetary co-operation was essential and Britain would have to be part of some form of European system. "To rage on about threats to sovereignty in modern global financial conditions is to live in a world of make believe."

But Mr Howell added: "It is also obvious that the British do not want or need to go beyond this close co-operation and actually abandon their currency." The British deserved a mainstream voice. Those who deny them that, by taking up a simplified and extreme positions, are letting them down badly."

Germans close ranks, page 15
Williams Rees-Mogg, page 18
Leading article, page 19



Mainstream Tories, from left, former ministers David Hunt and Tim Yeo, and Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, vice-chairman of the Macleod Group

By ANDREW PIERCE

THE Conservative Mainstream group was set up to raise the banner of One Nation Tories against the relentless rise of the Euro-sceptic wing of the party. Its public debut yesterday was the latest stage in the public fightback by the Tory Left, which began with the letter to *The Independent* from six Tory elder statesmen last week.

The centre-left group, dubbed Conservative Backwater by its opponents, professes loyalty to the Prime Minister and is urging MPs to rally behind the Cabinet line on Europe. But its leaders are privately critical of the failure of the high command to stand against the Euro-sceptics. The group was born of a deep frustration that Kenneth Clarke was the only Cabinet minister who dared to express the views of the Tory Left.

Conservative Mainstream may be

Tory Left fights back against Euro-sceptics

publicly loyal to Mr Major but the timing of its conference yesterday could not have been worse. It inevitably created the suspicion that they were setting out an alternative manifesto for the party conference based on closer European integration and higher welfare spending.

Four of the six Tory elder statesmen, who last week warned John Major to stand firm against the Tory Right, are supporting the initiative. Douglas Hurd is the public face. Sir Edward Heath, Lord Howe of Aberavon, and Lord Whitelaw are also involved to try to stop the party falling into the hands

of the Euro-sceptic Right. Kenneth Clarke is an enthusiastic supporter behind the scenes.

David Hunt, who until yesterday was the former Cabinet minister most closely associated with the group, had talked of attracting the support in Parliament of up to 300 MPs. It was an exaggeration. About 20 turned up for the launch at St Stephen's Constitutional Club in Westminster.

They included Peter Butler, the Chancellor's parliamentary private secretary, Tim Renton, Baroness Thatcher's last Chief Whip, Tim Yeo, a former minister, Sir Jim Lester, a close

ally of the Chancellor, and Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister.

Mainstream is an umbrella organisation for three left-of-centre groupings of Tory MPs: Macleod, Tory Reform and the Progress Group. The 30-strong Macleod Group is led by Peter Temple-Morris, the main organiser of the pro-European backbench Tory Left. Mr Temple-Morris will drag the foot soldiers of Tory federalism with the same fervour he displayed when he helped to run Michael Heseltine's 1990 leadership campaign. Leading members of the Tory Reform Group, led by David Hunt, include Kenneth Clarke, Michael Heseltine and Stephen Dorrell.

Mainstream is writing a framework policy document, which will be issued before the Tory manifesto to counterbalance the influence of the right-wing think-tanks that held great sway in the Thatcher era.

SNP attacked over 'racist' leaflets

THE Scottish National Party's latest attempt to cash in on the popularity of the so-called "kilt movies" was reported to the Commission for Racial Equality yesterday (Shirley English writes).

Maria Fyffe, Labour MP for Maryhill, complained about a "racist, anti-English" leaflet distributed at the Oasis concert at Loch Lomond last month. The leaflet, produced by the party's youth wing, quoted a character from the Irvine Welsh novel and film *Trainspotting*: "Some people

hate the English ... but I don't. They're just wankers. We, on the other hand, are colonised by wankers."

Yesterday the commission said that the leaflet did not breach race relations laws. But Ms Fyffe said: "I want to know if this is how they are inviting Scots to think about the English."

The SNP, which began its annual conference in Inverness yesterday, said that the leaflet was clearly anti-racist and Labour's complaint was a "sign of desperation".

Loonies promise shorter winter

JANUARY and February would be abolished if the Monster Raving Loony Party won the next election, Screaming Lord Sutch said yesterday.

The veteran party leader, wearing his customary tiger-striped lux suit and leopard-skin top hat, held a news conference on Westminster Bridge to unveil the Loony election manifesto, with its rallying message: "Vote for insanity — you know it makes sense."

Bellowing above the noise of traffic and flanked by a yellow-clad Banana Man and a John Major look-alike, Lord Sutch, 53, who has been campaigning for 33 years, promised to give £1 million to everyone who voted for him. This would be funded by making Britain a tax haven. "We will be knee-deep in money," he explained.

Scots who want their own parliament would be lent the London-based one, which would be put on wheels.

Other manifesto proposals include decimalising time to make life simpler "especially to when you're hungover, late for work, and trying to figure out a 24-hour timetable". There would be ten days to a week, ten hours to the day, 100 minutes to the hour and 100 seconds to the minute.

Observers believe that the Loony proposal to ban work before lunchtime "because it's far too difficult" could be a

Blair appeals to NEC for unity at conference

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR yesterday appealed for unity at Labour's annual conference next week amid fears that the leadership faces possible defeat over a number of issues such as pensions, child benefit and employment rights.

The Labour leader told a meeting of the National Executive Committee (NEC) that the main message he wanted to get over to the public was "a strong sense of unity".

Mr Blair gave warning that a string of humiliating defeats would send the wrong signal to the electorate, and Labour as divided. But the party has already taken contingency measures. The NEC has now drawn up a statement on child benefit which would take preference over a conference motion.

"By the end of the week we want people to know exactly what our core message is and what our major pledges are. We want people to know why it is in their interest to vote Labour," a source said.

Some members of the NEC were said to have been particularly angry about Gordon Brown's proposals to scrap child benefit for 16-18 year-olds and channel the money into educational allowances for poorer families. However, the NEC statement on child benefit was passed overwhelmingly by only Dennis Skinner, the leftwing MP for Bolsover, who was absent.

At a special hearing at Westminster yesterday to take evidence from consumer and voluntary groups, Derek Foster, the Shadow Public Services Minister, said: "We want to give the public something accessible, something in their own front rooms, where they can complain about public

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Boston bluebloods duel in battle to control Senate

FROM TOM RHODES IN BOSTON

IN A small Boston hall and surrounded by teenagers, the two political titans of Massachusetts resembled a pair of Gullivers addressing the parliament in Lilliput.

Each measuring 6ft 4in, William Weld, the state's Republican Governor, and John Kerry, the Democratic senator, offered a startling contrast in style to 400 high school pupils handpicked for the latest duel in what is becoming the hottest Senate race in America.

The similarity does not end there. The two multimillionaires represent the cream of their generation, both are highly articulate, Ivy League-educated, and belong to the patrician families who can trace their ancestry back to the Founding Fathers. They sail and fish at their private resorts and consort with the richest in America.

Their wives — Susan Weld, a Roosevelt relation, and Teresa Heinz, heiress to the \$750 million (£483 million) ketchup fortune — are well connected and adept at campaigning for their husbands. Observers believe that whoever wins in November could surface as a presidential candidate at the turn of the century.

At a national level, this election is critical for both parties. Massachusetts is a bedrock liberal state where

voters identify themselves as Democrat by three to one, and where President Clinton leads by more than 30 per cent.

If the Democrats have any hope of regaining control of the Senate, they cannot afford to lose this race. Republicans, on the other hand, see a victory in Massachusetts as an embarrassment for President Clinton and the first sign of a trend of new conservatism that could see the party back at the White House in 2000 if Bob Dole loses in November.

Opinion polls show the race to be a statistical dead heat. But it was here, on the stump, that the differences became apparent. Mr Kerry, 52, the decorated Vietnam veteran and former disciple of President Kennedy, appeared stiff and awkward as he talked of political and personal sacrifice, of education, the environment and housing.

Mr Weld, 51, on the other hand, connected immediately with an audience that was far from his natural constituency. Unlike Mr Kerry's unfocused and plodding message, the Governor stuck to the combination of fiscal conservatism and social libertarianism that has made him popular in the past six years.

He talked of balancing the budget during his first year in office, of cutting taxes, reducing the growth rate of Medicare,

aid, introducing the most stringent welfare legislation in the nation and eliminating thousands of state jobs. But he also talked of being pro-choice on abortion and of his concerns about teenage pregnancy.

Conventional wisdom suggests the Governor may be too popular for his own good and people will vote for Mr Kerry to keep both men in office. A third, arch-conservative candidate, Susan Gallagher, may siphon some votes from Mr Weld.

But a recent poll showed that most people in the state want to change their senator and there is still a suspicion about his wife's fortune. The Clinton campaign is concerned. George Stephanopoulos, the President's senior political adviser, and Robert Reich, the Labour Secretary, toured Boston last weekend on behalf of Mr Kerry.

This weekend Mr Clinton will join Whoopi Goldberg and Christopher Reeve, the film stars, to campaign in a state where, under normal circumstances, he would never need to show his face.

"It is a difficult race, because it's not only being run on the success or failure of Newt Gingrich and Robert Dole, it's a major test of the President's strength," Mr Stephanopoulos said.



A group of Palestinians attacking Israeli troops from the shelter of a van in the West Bank yesterday

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BINYAMIN NETANYAHU, the Israeli Prime Minister, is to appeal to President Mubarak of Egypt to calm the tensions in the Middle East that have been provoked by riots and shootings in the wake of the opening of a tunnel in Jerusalem.

Complaining of "wild and unfounded accusations", the Prime Minister added during a visit to France that he might

also speak to Yassir Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, if necessary.

Before arriving in Paris yesterday, he told the BBC Today programme that his Government would help with the infrastructure of settlements for an additional 800 Jews in the occupied territories, but said he was not "carting the people in". He was committed to the Oslo agreements, which allowed for the natural growth of Arab and Jewish communities.

Mr Netanyahu's remarks came after a Downing Street meeting at which John Major expressed Britain's concern that the Middle East peace process was in danger. Both men later described their talks as "frank and candid", which is diplomatic code for plain speaking and disagreement.

Britain has been concerned by the tone of Mr Netanyahu's remarks on relations with the Arabs, and is worried by the lack of practical progress on the ground.

The violence in Jerusalem came as Mr Netanyahu arrived in Paris on the second leg of his European tour. In Paris as in Bonn, there are similar worries over growing tensions in the Middle East.

He told the BBC he had inherited a peace agreement that he did not like, but he was going to pursue peace and the accords signed by his predecessor.

"I have not alienated anyone," he said. "I am sorry about the high-flown rhetoric in some quarters in Egypt."

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Netanyahu asks Cairo to calm tensions

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

PROJECTS that damage the environment, including mining, forestry and power-generation schemes, are still being funded by the World Bank seven years after it agreed to reform its lending policies in the light of green concerns.

A damning internal report, written by bank staff and based on studies in eight countries, has concluded that attempts to balance the economic needs of developing countries with the needs of plant and animal life are often failing. It indicates that highly damaging schemes such as the Polonoreste rural development project, which in the 1980s devastated swaths of the Amazon triggering violent clashes, are still happening — albeit on a smaller scale.

The report says that assessments of the environmental impact of bank-funded schemes are often made too late to have any real influence on the development of the project. In the meantime, serious alternatives to schemes are scrutinised only cosmetically. Even when a proper environmental investigation is carried out, the recommendations are often not put into action.

The document, details of which are disclosed as the World Bank meets in Washington for its fourth summit on environmentally acceptable development, adds:

"Projects reviewed by the study often generated massive documents that are of little use."

□ Geneva: A sharp increase in the costs of vaccination imposed by pharmaceutical companies is threatening immunisation programmes and the development of potential new vaccines against diseases such as Aids, the World Health Organisation and Unicef said yesterday (Peter Capella writes).

Clinton is accused of 'silencing' McDougal

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

INDIGNATION was growing in Washington yesterday over President Clinton's failure to rule out pardons for Whitewater defendants and the refusal of one of them, Susan McDougal, to testify whether he told the truth about a fraudulent loan.

Mrs McDougal, 41, who is serving an indeterminate sentence for contempt of court in Arkansas, has, with the help of prison guards, become a cell-block media queen, conducting interviews from Faulkner County jail.

Her lament, and Mr Clinton's non-committal answer when asked about post-election Whitewater pardons, has been pounced on by Republicans who see an issue voters will understand and condemn.

John Mica, a Republican congressman, accused the President of offering Mrs McDougal an inducement to remain silent. She was a partner with the Clintons and her former husband in the Whitewater land speculation.

Robert Walker, another Republican in Congress who frequently berates Mr Clinton, said the spectacle has offered hope of a pardon to all those who decline to co-operate with Kenneth Starr, the White-water special prosecutor.

Mrs McDougal refused to answer Mr Starr's questions before a grand jury over whether Mr Clinton lied during videotaped evidence at her trial that he did not know a government-backed loan she received for \$300,000 (£193,000) was fraudulent.

She has said she knows nothing to substantiate allegations of criminal wrongdoing by Mr or Mrs Clinton and refuses to help Mr Starr in his apparent pursuit of perjury charges against the couple. Mr Clinton has also taken aim at Mr Starr, a Republican, accusing him of pressuring Mrs McDougal to give damaging testimony against the Clintons, even if false.

Conjecture that Mrs McDougal was attempting to pressure the President while he was signalling to her to keep quiet was taking hold yesterday as US radio chat show fodder, propelling White House aides into urgent damage control. They insisted Mr Clinton was "absolutely not" holding the door open to pardons and had given the idea no consideration.

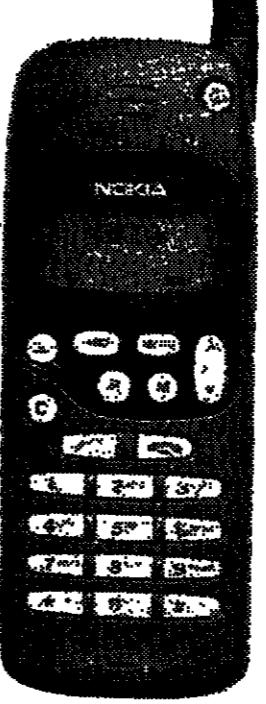
It would be an unprecedented advancement of the power to pardon for a President to exonerate anyone involved in an investigation in which he was already implicated. Joseph di Genova, former federal prosecutor in Washington, said it would be a ground for impeachment.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Clinton is accused of silencing McDougal

Student rebel forces launch triple assault to take Kabul

By ZAHID HUSSAIN

TALEBAN militia closed in on Kabul, the Afghan capital, yesterday as the fundamentalist student movement's fighters fought a fierce battle with government forces three miles from the city centre.

The group launched a three-pronged attack on Kabul after routing government forces in the strategic town of Sarobi, 45 miles from the capital, on Tuesday night.

The forces of President Rabbani were fighting last-ditch battles to defend the city as Taliban fighters attacked from the east, south and southwest. Government jets bombed Taliban forces assaulting a customs post three miles outside the city. Government sources said that there was heavy fighting around the post. The fall of the customs office would eliminate the last resistance by government troops.

The Kabul administration has repeatedly accused Pakistan of backing Taliban and providing it with arms and food. President Rabbani's Government has also alleged that Taliban's fighters are mainly students based in Pakistan and that it has received aircraft from Pakistani intelligence. A Taliban cargo plane landed at Badram airport near Kabul on Tuesday which, according to Kabul, carried seven Pakistani military personnel. The captured Pakistanis would be presented to the press, an administration spokesman said.

Pakistan has rejected Kabul's allegation. A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad said that no Pakistani was involved in the fighting in Afghanistan. He also denied that the Taliban fighters crossed the border from Pakistan.

The Taleban militia movement emerged as a major force in the Afghan civil war at the end of 1994. It consists of Afghan students from madrassas (religious schools) mostly based in Pakistan. A large number of them had

participated in the Afghan war against Soviet troops. Taleban came into prominence when its fighters stormed Kandahar in southern Afghanistan early last year, and from there they swept across southern and western Afghanistan.

More than half of Afghanistan was under Taleban's control by the end of 1995. Initially, Afghans who were disgruntled with the ruling warlords welcomed Taleban forces, but support began to vanish as they imposed tough discipline. They enforced strict Sharia (Islamic law) and banned women's education and music. Taleban's first attempt to capture Kabul last year failed and leading Afghan factions, including that of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, joined hands with his old foe, Mr Rabbani. Mr Hekmatyar became Prime Minister. However, after regrouping its forces, Taleban came back to eastern Afghanistan last month for their second onslaught on Kabul. Two weeks ago, they captured one of Afghanistan's second largest cities, Jalalabad.

There is clear evidence of Pakistani support for Taleban which has its main headquarters in the western Pakistani city of Quetta. Most of the fighters are under the influence of Pakistani religious and political organisations. Islamabat intensified its support for Taleban after its relations with the Rabani Government worsened following the attack on the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul last year.

Most observers believe a Taleban victory is not likely to bring peace to Afghanistan, but may lead to yet more bloodshed. There is also a fear that the capture of Kabul by Taleban could lead to more active interference from Iran.

□ New York: The United Nations Security Council has agreed to hold an emergency meeting to discuss Afghanistan after a request from Kabul. (AP)



Bearing the Argentine tramps' banner, Mario Alonso, left, Juan Podesta and Pedro Ribeiro follow a railway track towards Mar del Plata

Philosopher tramps debate reasons to be idle

By GABRIELLA GAMINI
SOUTH AMERICA CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of tramps and bag ladies are converging on the Argentine seaside resort of Mar del Plata to take part in an international conference to discuss topics such as the "right to be lazy" and "how to get a balanced diet from restaurant scraps".

The World Conference for Vagabonds, organised by an Argentine group of tramps and travellers, started on Monday and ends on Sunday with

a barn dance. It has attracted people from all over South America.

"It's taken me some time to get here," said Arturo Sonosa, 48, from neighbouring Paraguay. "I set out from Asuncion two months ago, walked some of the way, and managed to hitch some of the way."

Most dragged their belongings along the 250-mile motorway leading from the capital, Buenos Aires, to the beach resort, where they have taken up every spare alcove or doorway, sleeping rough despite chilly, gale-

force winds at night. "We've organised this to let everyone know that we are not just simple beggars or dirty layabouts. Most are ex-professionals who decided to take up another way of life," said Pedro Riveiro, the event organiser and a former teacher.

He added that they had been discussing "tramp philosophy" and "life without frivolities" and would issue a final document to strengthen their commitment to "anti-consumism". He said: "We've invited nutritionists to give lectures on how to get a healthy diet from scraps. By living without frivolities and recycling everything that we can get our hands on, we are also doing our bit to help the world's ailing environment."

The tramps identify with a community of travellers formed in 1920s called the Crotos after a Buenos Aires governor, José Camilo Crotos, who gave free rail passes to those left without jobs or homes by a recession so they could seek work elsewhere. Instead thousands used the incentive to start a life of "idleness".

Pornography Net surfer fined

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A SINGAPORE court has fined a man for downloading obscene pictures from the Internet, the first person to be convicted since the Government said that it would censor what people can see on the global computer network.

According to *The Straits Times*, Lai Chee Chuen, 41, pleaded guilty to charges of collecting scores of pornographic pictures from the Internet and to one charge of

possessing *Penthouse*, a magazine that is banned in Singapore. The newspaper said that Lai was fined \$361,500 (£28,200).

The pictures and the magazine were seized from Lai in July last year in a police raid on his home after a tip-off from Interpol. But it was not until July this year that the Government announced rules to block Singaporeans from seeing pornography and anti-government views on the Internet. By a September 15

deadline, the three local Internet providers installed software blocking out some of the known undesirable sites.

The Government has hired eight censors who regularly monitor the Net for pornographic and other politically sensitive sites that can be banned. Because laws to deal with computer pornography have not been framed, Lai was charged under the Films Act, which prohibits the possession of obscene visual images. *The Straits Times* said.

Rwanda war crimes trials under threat

Arusha: Rwanda's war crimes trials are due to open today

against a background of chaos prompting defence lawyers to threaten to resign and prosecution complaints that scores of witnesses have been murdered (Sam Kiley writes).

Prosecutors are anxious to resist any attempt to delay the trials because 85 mainly Tutsi witnesses have been killed in Rwanda this year.

But Johan Scheers, one of the defence lawyers, said he would resign if his motion to postpone the proceedings was not accepted. "I have not been able to contact a single one of the 30 to 40 witnesses my client has given me. They are mostly in refugee camps in Zaire, and after two trips there the authorities said I could not work. There were also problems with security," he said.

WORLD SUMMARY

Armenian police fire on rally

Yerevan: Security forces opened fire yesterday on opposition protesters in the Armenian capital, wounding an unknown number of them. Violence broke out after an estimated 40,000 people gathered outside the building housing the Central Election Commission. It was the third demonstration in as many days by people accusing President Ter-Petrosian of winning re-election through fraud in Sunday's election. Demonstrators fought back, grabbing for the guns and clubs carried by police and soldiers. (AP)

'Heretic' wins marriage battle

Cairo: An Egyptian court at Giza suspended — in effect indefinitely — an order to dissolve a university professor's marriage for heresy against Islam, a judicial source said. The Cairo appeals court made the order in June 1995, saying Nasser Abu Zeid, now in The Netherlands, was a "heretic" because of his writings. That decision was upheld last month by the Supreme Court of Appeal. (AFP)

Japan heads off island protest

Tokyo: Japanese patrol boats have closed in on protesters from Hong Kong to prevent them landing on uninhabited islands to challenge Tokyo's sovereignty (Robert Whymant writes). Coastguards and police moved to head off a ship carrying 18 Hong Kong activists towards the islands, called Senkaku in Japanese and Diaoyu in Chinese.

Eastwood loses court battle

Clint Eastwood, the Hollywood actor-director, has agreed in court to pay Sandra Locke, his former lover, several million pounds. The money, agreed in Burbank, California, was compensation for a film production deal that she said was meant to humiliate her.

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Dr Thomas Stuttaford on the latest drug treatment for panic disorders, the embarrassing problem of headaches that strike at the moment of orgasm, an opportunity for surgeons to inspect the Pope and the disorder that is hardly ever correctly diagnosed

How to help a patient in a panic

One of my patients this week, a 45-year-old mother with two young children I shall call Mary Robinson, glanced up from her newspaper account, open on my desk, of David Hamilton's panic attack and then told me her own story.

Mr Hamilton is the pilot who had a *crise de nerfs* while flying at 33,000ft over Paris. He insists that he wasn't suddenly frightened of heights, but that he wanted to land as soon as possible so that he could, as it were, take a quick stroll around the block. The troubles of my patient - a very competent professional woman who is spending a few years away from the office while her children grow up - are rather similar.

Mary, too, dislikes the enclosed sensation in an aircraft cabin, but the principal cause of acute anxiety in her case is travelling in the claustrophobic surroundings of the Underground. Incarceration in a closed space, which induces claustrophobia, is not the only circumstance to precipitate a panic attack in Mary. For she, like many other patients who are liable to these episodes, can have one suddenly, totally unexpectedly and for no apparent reason.

When Mary has an attack she complains that she suffers breathlessness, chest pains and palpitation; the palpita-

tions are caused by true tachycardia (rapid heart beat). In her case, the heart rate has increased to more than 200 beats a minute.

Not surprisingly, Mary has always feared that she must have something wrong with her cardiovascular system, and she worries about what would happen to her two children if she were to die from

Women and the young are most likely to be affected

a heart attack. This fear makes her symptoms worse.

Although my patient was momentarily reassured by normal electrocardiograms, her attacks returned and with them her anxiety. As a precaution, patients with panic disorder should have an echocardiogram, which allows the doctor to watch the heart working.

Patients with panic attacks also complain that they have a feeling that they cannot breathe in air fast enough to keep them alive and that they

are suffocating. Hence their panting respirations which in turn lead to chest pain, tingling and sometimes even spasm, in the hands and feet. Little wonder that Mr Hamilton experienced air hunger, had palpitations and felt that he needed a quick walk and a breath of fresh air - difficult demands to meet at 33,000ft.

Although panic attacks are more common when patients are stressed, tired or worried, panic disorder should not be diagnosed unless the attacks also occur in the absence of any precipitating feature.

Claustrophobia is not the only phobia which can bring on the symptoms of a panic attack. Other people will have the same sensation if, for instance, they are confronted by a spider (arachnophobia), or suffer from agoraphobia - an anxiety about being in strange surroundings, and on unfamiliar ground, which uncovers a fear that help is not immediately available.

The literal translation of agoraphobia is a fear of open spaces. Social phobias, extreme anxiety about meeting people whether as a member of an audience, or as the speaker, have a calming but not sedative action and a good side-effect profile.

Whatever drug is prescribed, cognitive and behavioural therapy are also needed, for the best results are obtained when psychotherapy is combined with the drug treatment.

The Pope is soon to have an operation to remove his appendix. The operation will give the surgeons a good opportunity to have a look around the papal peritoneal cavity in order to confirm their diagnosis and at the same time the chance to divide any adhesions that might have formed after his attempted assassination and the subsequent abdominal surgery.

Adhesions, a complication of the natural healing process, form when scar tissue grows between organs that ought naturally to be separated. They give rise to ever-tightening bands across the hollow intestines, a process which in time can result in obstruction. Adhesions form in most patients after abdominal surgery. A study at Westminster Hospital in 1990 showed that adhesions can later be demonstrated in 93 per cent of those who had pelvic and abdominal surgery, although, fortunately, in most cases they do not cause symptoms. The number of patients who have trouble from adhesions after an operation has been estimated at 5 per cent. Jeremy Thompson, a consultant surgeon at the Ealing and Hammersmith Hospital, suggests that adhesions are now, in developed countries, the commonest cause of obstruction of the small intestine, and are

second only to pelvic infection as a cause of infertility in women.

Any damage to intra-abdominal organs by rough handling favours the formation of adhesions. This is particularly important in women because of the danger of later infertility. Surgeons are now highly conscious of the need to handle organs and other tissues very gently. The kind of mache surgery

so well portrayed by James Robertson Justice in the *Doctor in the House* films, in which the surgeon rummaged around the abdominal cavity as he roughly hauled the organs out for general examination, is now very unfashionable. Improved and gentler techniques have reduced the incidences of post-operative adhesions, but research is continuing to find other means of avoiding this complication.

Research workers have been looking to the comb of the farmyard cock to solve the problems of adhesions. The rooster's comb contains a chemical, hyaluronic acid, which can form a natural barrier

Sex is a headache

A CONSULTANT physician, Dr Paul Woolley, at the University Hospital of South Manchester has written in the *British Journal of Sexual Medicine* about an unexpectedly common problem, orgasmic headaches.

Also known as benign sex headaches, or orgasmic cephalgia, they coincide with sexual intercourse but do not happen at other times. It starts as a dull ache at the back of the head and neck, but as excitement increases the headache becomes more generalised and can become excruciating. The report in the journal describes the pain as being "explosive", the same term which has been used by my patients when talking about the nature of the pain.

Although orgasmic headaches may be worse when the patient is tense and stressed, they often start without warning after years of pain-free sex. Men are affected more than women and Dr Woolley suggests the headaches occur when sex takes place several times over a short period. The doctor will check the patient's blood pressure as part of a general examination and may also order a scan to exclude any intra-cranial lesion. Treatment involves teaching muscle relaxation, as excessive tension in the head and neck muscles may precipitate an attack.



Don't panic — arachnophobia brought on by insects like this tarantula can be treated by new drugs

FOCUS ON THE 'UNKNOWN' DISEASE

There is no effective treatment for PSP, although its symptoms can be helped. PSP is progressive and the average patient lives for seven years after its diagnosis. The disease which starts



John Paul II: operation

and its first sign is often a difficulty in moving the eye up and down. Instinctive eye movements are unaffected. As the disease progresses, there is a loss of balance, slurred speech and problems in swallowing and coughing. Eventually patients die from respiratory failure.

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Surgery with a gentle touch

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operation to remove his appendix.

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Research workers have been looking to the comb of the farmyard cock to solve the problems of adhesions. The rooster's comb contains a chemical, hyaluronic acid, which can form a natural barrier



A Pair of Kwai Aces

When Phil and Jane heard a rumour that their neighbour thought a new couple had moved into their house they laughed. "We've been living here for six years - and she hadn't realised that Phil and I had been getting back into shape!"

It was Phil's fortieth birthday that made up their minds. "After the party we both realised how much quicker we recovered from these things ten years ago," recalls Jane, "so we made a big effort to start exercising and eat healthier food - I even stopped smoking."

"We tried to introduce more vegetables and fruit into our diet. I'd read how important antioxidants are, and how fresh vegetables are a good source."

We also tried new Kwai ACE. It's an odour free garlic tablet, with antioxidant vitamins A, C and E."

"Of course, taking Kwai ACE isn't all we do," says Phil. "We watch what we're drinking and regular exercise has become part of our lives. We look and feel years younger."

"As for our neighbour - I noticed some Kwai Ace in her shopping basket yesterday!"

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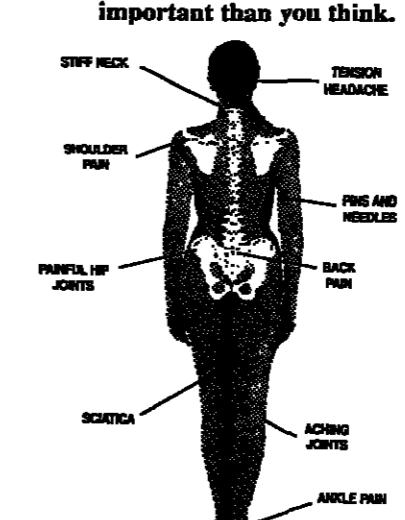
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'We are lucky to have Prince Charles'

Frankly, I wasn't looking forward to interviewing Sir Laurens van der Post. Invariably described as guru by appointment to the Prince of Wales, would he not be rather intimidating or utterly boring? Surely I would face an endless, enigmatic discourse of the whimsical look-deep-into-the-depths-of-the-moon variety? Would he betray an overweening sense of self-importance?

Given his great age — he is 90 — I realised, out of respect, I would be bound to listen without interruption. On the doorstep, I imagined him painstakingly reiterating all the events and characters in his 25th and latest book, *The Admiral's Baby*. The hour's appointment was going to seem an age.

Two-and-a-half hours later I was still there, mesmerised by the man with the sad, soulful blue eyes, captivated by his storytelling skills, and by the charm and courtesy that could have emanated only from a man born during the Edwardian era.

His secretary told me, politely, that as I had been rather longer than anticipated, Sir Laurens

had missed his afternoon nap. It was too late now because Sir James Goldsmith was due.

There had, after all, been no sermons, just the kind of talk that would have struck chords with many of the thoughtful young parading along the King's Road below.

As for *The Admiral's Baby*, he laughed, waving a dismissive arm. "Oh darling," he said, "you didn't have to trawl through all that, you know." Except that it wasn't a trawl. The book is a remarkable and poignant testimony about the period following his release from a Japanese PoW camp. It also embraces one of his most firmly held beliefs: how to forgive the unforgivable.

He tells how, after 3½ years of brutal captivity, he found himself in the extraordinary position of guiding his captors, at their request, towards holding the peace in Java.

He recalls: "I stank of war for so long that, like many men, I found it difficult to return to normal domestic life." In fact, his first marriage



The world is in peril, but people such as the Prince of Wales are trying to save it, says Sir Laurens van der Post. Interview by Noreen Taylor



Sir Laurens in his penthouse: "Moving up means moving closer to nature"

fast here watching dawn breaking, along with the 30 different species of birds.

"Moving up in London means moving closer to nature. People are always saying to me: 'Oh, you're always going on about Africa and the great wildernesses of the world, yet you live in the middle of Chelsea.' I tell them that if I lived in Africa I wouldn't be able to write. There's too much going on there. My wife tells people: 'Oh, my husband hasn't left Africa, he just lives in London.'

Laurens van der Post was born in South Africa in 1906, the 13th of 15 children in a pioneering family of Dutch and French origins. Writer, journalist, fighter against apartheid, explorer, soldier, farmer, conservationist, his name first came to prominence through his books and documentaries about the Kalahari Bushmen. But there are more pressing problems.

'He is a man of vision, of many interests and gifts'

corrupted us. I know because I think of little else. We are now living in a time of great transformations. Present society is at the end of its cycle, just as Babylon and Ancient Egypt have vanished, so will we. Like those societies, we have failed to regenerate. Instead, we continually repeat our mistakes, choosing not to learn from them.

We're a wasteful, confused people. A people in peril. What are we doing to nature, to the Great Mother Earth, is frightening. We can't go on like this if mankind is to survive. The breeding around the world, we cannot go on filling the Earth in such uncontrolled numbers ... At the same time, humankind finds itself increasingly segregated, corralled on to a narrow road leading it away, far away from what I would call, a natural kind of life. We're trapped. And being trapped turns some among us to commit the most evil acts. Yes, you can cite child murderers, paedophilia. Such acts come from the violence within, from using our lives in the wrong way. For the first time we're living in an age without an institution to guide us. Everything is up for reappraisal: religion, the Church, Parliament.

"Why are we here? What are we to do? Why am I so sad, so anxious all the time, I hear people say? I'm continually asked such questions ... When you've been lucky enough to sell millions of books as I have done, your constituency tends to be a rather large one. People tell me they are frightened."

So what crumbs of comfort can the wise old seer offer to those seekers of such imponderables? Those who come to still the clamour in their heads.

• *The Admiral's Baby* is published by John Murray on October 10, £19.99.

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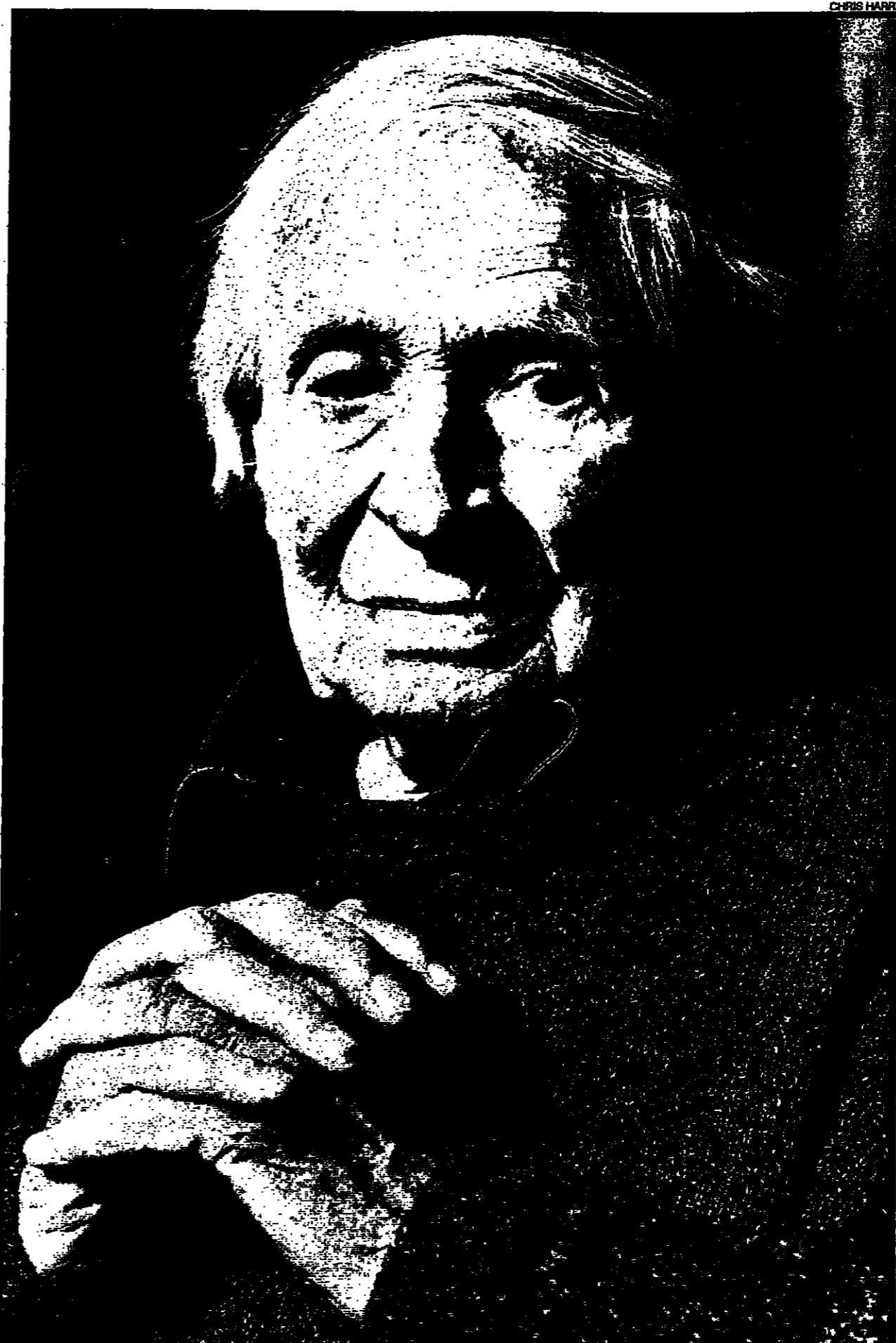
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Nothing learnt, nor forgotten

For Eilis O'Hanlon, Gerry Adams is no Irish Mandela

For Gerry Adams, the Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn is what Lenin wickedly called a "useful idiot". Even the discovery of an imminent IRA bombing campaign this week was not enough to deter the Member for Islington North from providing a platform in the Palace of Westminster for Sinn Fein's president to promote his autobiography. The threat of losing the Labour whip may not have the desired effect either.

But the Labour leadership's determination to ditch the party throughout the Troubles, and to pursue instead a policy of mundane realism in Northern Ireland, has been perhaps the least expected and hence the most pleasing of Tony Blair's reforms. For the first time in Labour's history, the Corbyns have been firmly banished to the political fringe.

None of this makes much difference to the Provisional IRA itself, of course, as a reading of Gerry Adams's *Before The Dawn* makes plain. The IRA operates in a fantasy world every bit as strange as Corbyn's own and has always taken an obscene delight in demonstrating anew its sanguinary ingenuity. Reports of our demise, each murder proclaims, have been greatly exaggerated; and nowhere was this cry more loudly echoed, as the Sinn Fein leader himself recalls, than at

Warrenpoint, where 18 British soldiers died at the hands of an IRA bomb. Adams conspicuously leaves unremarked the explosion on the same day, at Mullaghmore in Co Sligo, which killed Lord Mountbatten of Burma. Not even to mention Mountbatten in this context, as if his death were so insignificant that republicans barely remembered it, looks like a calculated exercise in insensitivity. Likewise his determination to launch the publicity campaign for his book from the House of Commons — the symbol of British democracy, and a place which was itself described by the assassination of Airey Neave in 1979.

Republicanism's indifference to all rights and traditions and identities and sufferings but its own is apparent throughout this sentimental, self-aggrandising, one-sided account of the Troubles. The Northern Ireland he evokes is a place in which innocent Roman Catholics, guarded only by the IRA, risk near-daily death and torture at the hands of bloodthirsty loyalists but in which nothing is ever the fault of Irish republicans. One would not guess from this account of the early 1970s, for example, that it was the IRA which was responsible for the great majority of murders, or that it has killed three times more Catholics than the British Army and the RUC combined.

The same dishonesty characterises his consideration of the effects of violence. At the funeral of a young republican shot dead by the British Army, Mr Adams confesses himself

G'bye Paula

TIME to dig out the bunting and pop the spumante: Paula Yates, rock siren, mother and breast enlarger, plans to leave London for Australia. Miss Yates is at present in Sydney visiting the parents of the pop star Michael Hutchence, the small, hairy father of Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily, her youngest daughter.

Interviewed in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Yates says: "I love Australia. There is no comparison with Britain. Australia is special to me — my new daughter

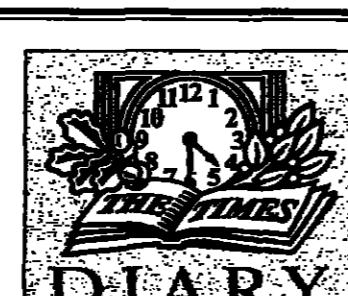
is Australian. I think we will definitely move here." She follows up her bombshell with the caveat that "we would have to arrange it with Bob so he could see his children as much as possible". Bob, of course, is Bob Geldof, sire to Yates's other three daughters.

Despite what seemed to outsiders a rather rancorous split from Geldof, Yates is determinedly upbeat about her novel family set-up. "Things are so nice at home," she says. "It's like the bloody Waltons."

By moving to the other side of the world, Yates hopes she can find some peace away from the hyenas of the British press. "In London they chase my children down the street until they fall over. Then they take pictures of them crying and run them with a headline saying 'Paula's children cry over her divorce'. The Australian media have been really nice." Long may it continue.

In absentia

DOING her bit for London Fashion Week, Norma Major was judging a children's fancy-dress competition last night on behalf of



thorpe and is not unacquainted with the young girl — for she is Rosie's aunt.

Nick knack

AMID Paddy Ashdown's macho posturing at the Liberal Democrat conference in Brighton there was one tender moment. Nick Clarke, the presenter of the BBC's *World at One* received a smacker on the lips from a male admirer yesterday. After interviewing Ashdown in the conference hall, Paddy's sup-

porters heckled Clarke for giving their leader a hard time.

Then, a middle-aged gentleman came to his aid; he pushed through the throng and, in the heat of the moment, kissed him squarely on the lips. "That's from my wife, she's a great admirer," he gushed, leaving Clarke speechless.

Rusty steed

THE IRON Duke is looking a little unsteady on his feet. The statue of the Duke of Wellington astride his steed at Hyde Park Corner is to undergo exploratory surgery. J.E. Boehm's famous 1888 bronze figure of the duke mounted on his horse Copenhagen overlooks Apsley House, still the ducal home in London. "There's some cracking at the base," says a National Heritage spokesman of Boehm's statue. "We need to investigate."



"Oh, he's not in the show, he just stalks the model"

THE QUEEN'S nephew, Viscount Linley, has found a new home in Belgravia, haunt of wealthy aristocrats and Baroness Thatcher. I understand he is behind the transformation of two mews houses into a substantial family house at a cost of more than £1 million. Locals believe that Linley is



Linley and Serena: nesting

building his marital home, despite the fact that he bought a large £400,000 flat last year in the top floor of a former secondary school in Battersea. Others suggest that he could be expanding his furniture empire or even moving into property development.

Linley has been showing interest in Belgravia property for some time. He was keen on the old police station which was sold instead for £2 million to Count Leopold Bismarck, great-grandson of Germany's Iron Chancellor, who plans to knock it down and build anew. Frantic excavation is now underway at the mews house. "They're going to hit the Underground if they carry on like this," says a neighbour.

P.H.S

Modernist homage to St Paul's
Giles Worsley on Paternoster, the Prince's square

No cause has been more closely identified with the Prince of Wales's intervention in architecture than Paternoster Square, to the north of St Paul's Cathedral. Touching a chord of popular dissent, his speech at the Mansion House in 1987 effectively brought a halt to plans for a Modernist redevelopment and led directly to the Classical scheme by the architects John Simpson and Terry Farrell, which replaced it.

Now that proposal, which has planning permission, has just been abandoned by the owners of the site, Mitsubishi. Instead a new scheme, masterminded by Sir William Whitfield, will be submitted to the planners. Of the four architects recently chosen to give flesh to Whitfield's masterplan, Sir Michael Hopkins and Richard MacCormac were involved in the earlier abortive Modernist scheme by Arup Associates, while Allies and Morrison is also a Modernist practice. Only John Simpson survives of the old team of architects from the Classical scheme. Has all that the Prince fought for been abandoned? Is Simpson's commission a mere sop to royal concern?

That is certainly how it is being presented by the Prince of Wales's architectural critics. Obsessed with the question of style, many of these are unable to see beyond the Classical language of the Simpson and Farrell scheme and realise that the real issue is not a battle of columns against glass and steel, but of planning and respect for the setting of St Paul's. The columns and pilasters may have gone, but the principles for which the Prince argued would appear to have survived in Whitfield's masterplan. Indeed, in many ways his ideals are better represented now than they were in the scheme that received planning permission.

By the time it was finally approved, Simpson's original plan had been severely compromised. Simpson had suggested redeveloping the area along lines which respected the grain and character of the prewar street pattern. Simpson's recreation of the traditional London streetscape was in strong contrast to the Arup scheme, which would have seen the effective privatisation of the public domain, as in the Broadgate development by Liverpool Street station.

But the American developers who dominated the complicated ownership of the site demanded changes. An underground shopping mall arrived, and what had been planned as a series of individual buildings ended up as a single megastructure which spoke the exuberant language of American commercial Classical architects. In place of Simpson's original, essentially Georgian, austerity came a rich vocabulary of columns and pilasters, reminiscent of 1900s New York. Although many of the original urban ideals remained, Paternoster Square was perilously close to being a standard commercial development in Classical dress.

It would appear that Whitfield's redesign has stripped out the less palatable elements so recently deemed essential by commercial experts. The open square with traditional streets has survived, but the underground shopping has gone and so has the massive substructure. Once again, each of the different buildings is distinct. This also means that in due course the site can be redeveloped piecemeal and so reintegrated into the City, something which could not have happened with the earlier scheme.

Not all the changes are positive. The absence of Demetri Porphyros from the list of architects is a pity, as he was the only one of the earlier architects who seemed to be transcending the corporate Classicism of his neighbours to suggest a new way forward for designing large urban buildings. There are also some who consider that the relationship between St Paul's and the south end of the square is not yet satisfactorily resolved. But the spirit of the Prince of Wales's proposal remains intact.

Much will depend on whether Whitfield is able to insist on a common code of building ethics — of language and materials — across the site which would be respectful to St Paul's. Looking at Allies and Morrison's recent restrained Dublin Embassy or Hopkins's Glyndebourne, I can see no reason why they should not. These architects represent the respectable face of English Modernism, prepared to learn from the past as well as the present, and with a growing interest in traditional materials and structural techniques. They have little in common with the uncompromising stance of, say, Richard Rogers in the Lloyd's Building.

Empty and forlorn, Paternoster Square today is a national humiliation. The sooner it is demolished and replaced the better. But in its haste, the Corporation must not allow itself to compromise on quality. As the character of the City changes with the relaxation of planning controls, particularly in conservation areas, and with the threat of massive towers rising before us, the least we can expect is that certain areas of the City retain their distinction. Paternoster Square must be one of them.

The author is Editor of Perspectives on Architecture.



NOTHING STRAIGHT

Little about EMU is simple, least of all its prevention

Even assuming that Cabinet discipline is restored, John Major's policy on EMU will be difficult to sustain up to the general election. Strategic ambiguity is a hard concept to defend; it is readily pilloried as weakness. There will be no relaxation of the pressures on the Prime Minister to head for the escape hatch and rule out British entry into EMU during the next Parliament.

Those arguing this course have a decent case. At some point — probably by the end of next year — the option will anyway have to be closed. An early declaration would steal an electoral march on Labour. It can be argued that Britain's best hope of derailing the project lies in giving clear advance notice of Britain's determination to stay clear, since EMU will be a disaster for Britain, whether or not it joins, why not say "no" now?

The best argument on the other side is that strategic ambiguity will help Britain's prospects of persuading others in Europe about the danger of proceeding with EMU in 1999. British leverage is small; but it is not worth reducing for that reason alone. EMU is creating extraordinary tensions in continental Europe. Their outcome is extremely uncertain. Why not stay poised to make the best of uncertain events?

Much can happen in the 18 months before EU governments meet in the spring of 1998 to decide who qualifies for EMU. Some governments know already that they cannot meet the Maastricht criteria by next year. They fear that they will be discriminated against by the "insiders". They may be highly receptive to Britain's arguments about how damagingly divisive EMU will be.

Britain occupies the rotating EU presidency for the first half of 1998 and would preside over the critical summit. Among non-qualifiers, together with Scandinavian governments increasingly worried by the high unemployment costs of complying with Maastricht disciplines, Britain might hope to build a blocking minority against proceeding in 1999. The task would be to assemble 26 votes against any fudging of the criteria for those, such as Belgium, that could not otherwise qualify.

One increasingly attractive option for EMU's backers, therefore, is delay. German politicians, aware of the abiding unpopular-

ity of EMU with German voters and with their eye on the German national elections in 1998, may even come to endorse delay as the only way to rescue the project. As we report today on page 15, hints to that effect are coming both from Chancellor Kohl's likely successor, Wolfgang Schäuble, and his Finance Minister, Theo Waigel. Gerhard Schröder, the Social Democrat most likely to challenge Herr Kohl in 1998, openly looks to Britain to produce the "interesting surprises" needed for a postponement.

British ambiguity cannot guarantee delay; and delay cannot guarantee an EMU derailment. There is even the risk that, by reassuring German voters, it would make EMU more likely. But the panic that the mere thought of delay evokes in the French Establishment suggests otherwise.

In France, too, 1998 is a general election year and, well before then, the Chirac Government needs to be able to meet the Maastricht criteria and end austerity.

Even after the creative accounting that went into this year's French budget it is still too tough for the unions, who are taking to the streets again. Provided the timetable holds, Alain Juppé can still say, as he did yesterday, that "to give up now, when we are so close to the goal, would be pathetic" and would squander "the efforts over several years of our entire nation". If it slips, it would be political suicide to try to hold the budgetary line. In Germany earlier this year, M Juppé admitted that if EMU were postponed just for a year, "then it will be 2010 and nothing will have been done". For France, that looks like the plain truth.

For the British Government the odds are desperately hard to calculate. A derailing strategy will require deft tactical shifts and as difficult to guide as it is to explain. There are no soundbites to be had, no words of easy reassurance to the Conservative Party faithful in Bournemouth. But to borrow from Kant, out of the crooked timber of European politics nothing straight was ever made. Great and lasting damage to Britain could result from EMU; those who would have the Government reject EMU now should first ask whether that is the best way to prevent such damage. On today's best reckoning, it is not.

OPEN LABOUR

Coming cleaner on tax, cracking harder on terrorism

By facing down his rebels and facing up to reality Tony Blair is showing a seriousness about power which may make its capture more likely. The Labour leader is right to act against those in his party who sabotage his chances of victory by posturing with partisans. Mr Blair is also right to consider closing his credibility gap on taxation by providing some facts. Neither is a sufficient condition for victory but both are very necessary.

The threat of disciplinary action towards the Islington North MP, Jeremy Corbyn, for inviting the Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams to the House of Commons is a welcome assertion of Mr Blair's authority. Mr Adams put himself beyond the pale when the IRA ended its ceasefire. He is more than an apologist for terror; he is a leader of the republican movement whose plans to inflict potentially massive loss of life were, mercifully, intercepted on Monday.

Mr Adams hoped to use this week to advance the case for the violent dismemberment of this country with a partial, and polemical, autobiography. The discovery that IRA terrorists were planning a series of "spectaculars" has been a better insight into the nature of republicanism than any glossy hardback. Mr Corbyn was still happy to give Mr Adams a platform in the Commons, holding cheap the lives of innocents and the principles of the House. Labour's Chief Whip, Donald Dewar, was quite correct to warn Mr Corbyn of the consequences.

The prospect of a closer understanding with the Liberal Democrats could free Mr Blair from reliance on his hard left for a working majority. Withdrawing the whip from rebels could be an effective way for him to distance his party from its extremists and its past. The prospect of Mr Blair being a Trojan horse for the hard Left is diminished if there is no hard Left inside Labour.

There are dangers. The prospect of a respected dissident such as Tony Benn being disciplined reawakens memories of unhappy episodes in the past when men such as Stafford Cripps, Michael Foot and even Aneurin Bevan felt the leadership's lash and party cohesion was placed under strain. But parties are often better for shedding their past and forging new relationships. The reforming Liberal administration of 1906 which Mr Blair so much admires was unencumbered by its old Unionist right wing and encouraged in its radicalism by the infant Labour Party.

That administration, like all progressive Governments, could only fund its radical ambitions by increasing taxation. If Labour is to fulfil even the modest expectations it has aroused it must show how, credibly, it could afford its programmes. It will strain belief if, as in 1959, Labour raises hopes in an election campaign without any plans to raise taxes. It will be difficult to balance popular appeal with fiscal honesty; but the revelation of that balance is at last beginning.

COOL BRITANNIA

Fashion's fickle eye is fixed on London

A fusillade of flashbulbs and an autumnal rustle of chequebooks has marked this season's London Fashion Week. Britain's frockfest has long been Cinderella beside those uncouth sisters of haute couture, Paris and Milan. Not this year: in both media and marketplace there is unprecedented interest in the designs of London.

British designers may not have the glamour of Paris or the elegance of Milan. But, like so much of current British culture, they have a sense of excitement and engagement that leaves rivals looking like dowagers upstaged by a coltish mistress. It is a cause for celebration far beyond South Molton Street that native talent has seduced, and held, fashion's fickle eye. British fashion employs 400,000 people and earned £3 billion in exports last year.

Just three years ago the elegant nostrils of the voguish detected the smell of death about London Fashion Week. But three years in fashion is the equivalent of a thousand in history — long enough for a city to move from decadence to barbarism and then enjoy a renaissance. The number of buyers clustered round London catwalks has been on a steep upward incline for the past two seasons. Designers from abroad, most notably New York's Donna Karan and Tommy Hilfiger, are showing in London this week, anxious to associate themselves with the British buzz.

whether partnerships such as Copperwheel Blundell and Clements Ribeiro, or individuals such as Antonio Berardi and Alexander McQueen, have made London manner. Like literary Paris in the Thirties, or artistic Soho in the Fifties, London is seen by the fashion world as a nursery for genius.

Britain is the natural home of the idiosyncratic. When fashion's face became blander in the Eighties, Britain, as so often before, stood out alone. Vivienne Westwood, like Margaret Thatcher, helped to save individualism in Britain by her exertions and in Europe by her example.

Now, in the Nineties, a reaction against corporate conformity has made the quixotic more commercial than the commercial. That has helped British fashion, which has always been more street than elite. It takes its influences from the bottom up, sometimes literally in the case of instant classics such as Alexander McQueen's "bumsters" which create a cleavage closer to the building-site than the boudoir.

But the sassiness on show on the *passarella* also reflects a broader British pop-cultural self-confidence. A distinctive attitude, heard in the accessible but subversive lyrics of new British bands, apparent in the ironic installations of young conceptual artists and even informing the cooking in London's new-wave restaurants is audible, visible, even edible evidence of a country

German role in modern Europe

From Mr David Powis

Sir, The revelation by George Urban (September 23) that Lady Thatcher's views on Germany and the Germans were "not all that different from the Alf Garnett version of history" is surprising.

Throughout this century, Britain has suffered from political leaders with no real feel for European ideas or culture. Has any British Premier spent an extended period of time, in a non-political role, in another European country, or taken the trouble to master another European language?

It is accepted as normal that British politicians, from Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary downwards, will visit Germany and address their audiences in English, just as it is equally accepted that most German statesmen on visits to the UK will address us in English. Why do we persist in this arrogant attitude to our continental neighbours, most of whom are economically more successful than we are? If British political leaders had been better travelled, more deeply cultured, less chauvinistic and better linguists, the history of the 20th century might have been very different.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID POWIS,
The Corner House,
Inkberrow, Hereford and Worcester.
September 23.

From Mr John Lyons

Sir, In your editorial of September 23 you state that Lady Thatcher's "anxieties about German domination have been in many respects vindicated by Chancellor Kohl's drive for monetary and political union".

That sentiment, I have found, lies at the heart of the view of many of the Euro-sceptic (in reality Europhobe) Tory Right. But, as your own words demonstrate, it is based on a fallacy and is a contradiction in terms. If Germany wanted to dominate Europe it would try to break up the EU not seek to turn it into an effective trans-national organisation in which its own economic and political power is irreversibly subsumed.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN LYONS,
305 Salmon Street, Kingsbury, NW9.
September 24.

From Mr M. Fooks

Sir, Mr Urban says (September 23) with regard to institutional guarantees in Germany: "These could not be easily circumvented by a future extremist party or a dictator". How naive. This sort of thing was no obstacle to Hitler and would be no obstacle to a Hitler Mark II. The fact that opinions are shared with Alf Garnett does not invalidate them.

Yours faithfully,
M. FOOKS,
24 Bloomsbury Square, WC1.
September 24.

From Mr Patrick Haslett

Sir, George Urban refers today to Margaret Thatcher's "rather old-fashioned" nationalism.

Old-fashioned? Much blood is currently being shed around the world in the name of nationalism; I doubt Mr Urban would win many converts to his view among the nationalists in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales.

Surely nationalism was behind the German desire for the unification of their country.

Yours,
PATRICK HASLETT,
2 Kensington Close,
Haglunds Lane, West Chiltington,
Pulborough, West Sussex.
September 23.

From Mr Paul Richards

Sir, I read with interest today George Urban's opinion that Margaret Thatcher "lost faith in Major in only 22 days". What took her so long?

I remain, Sir, etc.
PAUL RICHARDS
(Labour prospective parliamentary candidate for Billericay),
109 Hamnersmith Bridge Road, W6.
September 24.

Clarke and currency

From Mr Tony Marlow, MP for Northampton North (Conservative)

Sir, It is now inconceivable that any foreseeable Conservative government would seek to join a European single currency.

It is also impossible for the Conservative Party to win the election unless opposition to Britain's participation becomes the confident and declared policy of the party.

It is evident that the Chancellor is more committed to a federal Europe than he is to Conservative government. He should go.

Yours faithfully,
TONY MARLOW,
House of Commons.
September 25.

From Mr Don Weedon

Sir, The European single currency should get off to a good start on its launching day, January 1, 1999, which is (a) Friday and (b) a Bank Holiday.

Yours faithfully,
DON WEEDON,
16 Winsford Gardens,
Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Lessons from Maxwell trial for Serious Fraud Office

From Mr Anthony McStravick

Sir, Your leading article of September 20, "Serious fare", highlights once again the continuing misfortunes of the Serious Fraud Office (letters, September 21).

Unfortunately, I fear that whatever body, if not the SFO, had prosecuted in most of the big fraud trials that have occurred in recent years would have had similar criticisms levelled at it. Despite the 1986 recommendations of Lord Roskill's fraud trials committee, most of which were rejected by the House of Commons, we are in no better shape now, and maybe worse than we were.

As a former Metropolitan Police detective chief superintendent I had first-hand experience of the SFO from its inception and worked with the directors, John Wood, Barbara Mills and the present incumbent, George Stample.

Apart from the complexity of many cases during that period the main hurdle facing them and the case controllers was that raised in your article — the problem of the responsibility for investigation and prosecution lying in the same hands. Despite valiant attempts, and some verbal gymnastics, difficulties and conflict were ever present, mainly for the lawyers.

The role of investigation should surely be returned to the police. Some of the SFO budget could then be applied to enlisting the assistance of lawyers and accountants, much as under the fraud investigation group, and the police should be allowed the same Section 2 powers as the lawyers and accountants, as recommended by the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice.

Yours sincerely,
TONY McSTRAVICK
(Senior Consultant,
Control Risks Group Ltd,
83 Victoria Street, SW1).
September 23.

From Mr Keith E. Oliver

Sir, Reaction in some of the media to the decision of Mr Justice Buckley to stay further criminal proceedings against Kevin Maxwell has been depressingly familiar to those concerned with his defence.

The jury trial of what the prosecution considered to be the most serious

alleged criminality, namely conspiracy to defraud the Maxwell pensioners, lasted 131 court days. There had earlier been over 60 days of preliminary hearings.

Over 70 witnesses were called. Kevin Maxwell himself gave evidence for over 20 days. In summing up, Lord Justice Phillips said of Mr Maxwell:

"I doubt if there have ever been many criminal cases where the jury have had a better opportunity to study the demeanour of a witness."

After one of the longest jury retirements on record (seven days of deliberation), the defendants were unanimously acquitted. The following morning, the Attorney-General saw fit to announce, on national radio, that the Government was now looking at the use of juries in serious fraud cases.

A fair system of criminal justice must be judged according to whether or not individuals accused of serious crime can be tried within a reasonable time and have the opportunity properly to defend themselves. Merely because the jury concludes that a defendant did not act dishonestly does not in any way represent a "failure", "fiasco" or "farce" as the Maxwell case has variously been described in some of the recent headlines; neither does it represent a failure for the Serious Fraud Office, who all too frequently appear to be judged according to criteria more appropriate to a sporting enterprise than to a properly resourced investigative and prosecuting authority. As Mr Justice Buckley put it:

I am suggesting that if all parties played their part and the essential criminality alleged has been placed before a jury who have acquitted, it should be unusual for a second trial to take place. The reason is that it would be very likely to appear to the public that the authorities were not prepared to accept the verdict of a jury and were prepared to pursue the defendant at whatever cost to the public purse, court time or disruption to the defendant's personal life, business or professional career. That must not happen.

Widespread criticism of the jury system is insulting to the 12 jurors who so manifestly discharged their duty to try the defendants according to the evidence. Many of 10-plus written questions the jury asked during the course of the trial demonstrated, to all of those present, a keen un-

derstanding of the issues that lay at the heart of the case.

Lord Justice Phillips and Mr Justice Buckley have ensured that common sense and fairness remain at the heart of our criminal justice system. For that, they deserve our gratitude.

Yours faithfully,

KEITH E. OLIVER,
Peters & Peters
(Solicitors to Kevin Maxwell),
2 Harewood Place,
Hanover Square, W1.

September 23.

From Mr Edward Freeman

Sir, If, as Mr Jonathan Goldberg says (letter, September 21), the real issue at the heart of a fraud is often "relatively simple", the onus must be on counsel to elucidate the matter convincingly before a jury.

To suggest that the inclusion of experts, such as accountants, stockbrokers or bankers, amongst jurors would present "no real danger of their attaching too much weight to [the experts'] views" is either naive or wishful thinking: we all know how laymen defer to "expert" advice, even if there are clearly good and bad experts. And, if expert jurors were introduced in cases of serious fraud, why not stop there? Either the jury system works or it doesn't: tampering with it is likely to produce more problems than it solves.

However, clearly not all barristers are able to unravel complex and technical issues effectively in court. In which case, why not allow jurors more direct access to expert witnesses themselves, just like the ones Mr Goldberg uses himself?

Yours sincerely,

EDWARD FREEMAN,
The Gables, South Strand,
East Preston, West Sussex.

September 22.

From Mr Raymond Durrant

Sir, Would there have been calls for changes in the way fraud trials are conducted, had the Maxwell brothers been convicted?

Yours faithfully,

RAYMOND DURRANT,
195 Marshalswick Lane,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.

September 24.

No easy answers

From Mr Richard Ward</p

Short breaks boom as sun holidays fade

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

SHORT breaks in places as diverse and unexpected as the Polish salt mines, Table Mountain in Cape Town and the sand dunes of Dubai are becoming the latest holiday trend as Britons increasingly turn their backs on the traditional two weeks in the sun. The city break is booming after having levelled off during the recession and tour operators are offering an ever wider choice of cities and unusual resorts.

Travel agencies have sold £200 million worth of short-break holidays in the past year. 60 per cent of which are to cities and almost all at the full brochure price.

An estimated 600,000 people a year book city breaks through travel agencies and a further 150,000 make their own arrangements.

Demand is so great that Thomson, determined to regain its dominant position in the short-break market, is more than doubling the choice of cities available in its new City Breaks brochure, listing 32 destinations in Europe, America and South Africa.

New destinations include Boston and Washington, as well as the European cities of Warsaw, Cracow, Budapest, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Nice, Verona and Istanbul. The ability to pre-book visits to music festivals and historic sites, and even meals is proving a particular attraction to families with little time to plan their own itinerary. In Dubai, for example, holidaymakers who pay from £499 for three nights, including return flights, accommodation and breakfast, can pre-book a tour of Bedouin villages and lunch in a wadi for £47 a person.

Seven nights in Cape Town cost from £999 in the low season and a visit to Table Mountain and the Cape of Good Hope is an extra £55. Three nights in Cracow costs from £335 in a four-star hotel and a four-hour visit to the salt mines costs an extra £22.

Charles Newbold, Thomson's managing director, says: "The attraction of short breaks is such that many holidaymakers are now opting for a city holiday each year, as well as the traditional beach

holiday. Next year's price rises are limited to about 1 per cent, so we expect to see a significant increase in demand."

For the city-breaks specialist Crystal Cities, Paris and Amsterdam are still favourites, followed by Dublin and Prague. But the introduction of the Eurostar train service has propelled Brussels into the seventh most popular spot.

Alan Berry, the product director of Crystal Cities, says: "The Belgian cities of Brussels and Bruges have shown a good increase this year as a result of Eurostar's popularity. Prague has been one of our top-selling destinations since the launch of the programme and the trend towards city combinations continues to grow; for example, an increasing number of clients are adding a stay in Vienna and Budapest."

• First Choice Holidays is offering free grandparent places on holidays next summer. Grandparents must be aged over 60 and share a two-bedroom apartment with at least two full-fare-paying holidaymakers and one child.



Tourists are welcome once again in the attractive — and now peaceful — town of Split

Visitors return to Croatia

By JOHN YOUNG

LOOKING slightly bemused, British passengers arriving at Split airport in Croatia last week were showered with roses and champagne and serenaded by guitars and mandolins. The occasion was the arrival of the first organised tour group since fighting began in 1991.

The party of 80 or so were clients of Saga Holidays which, before the fighting began, was taking some 22,000 people a year to 22 resorts along the Dalmatian coast. Local tourist officials greeted their arrival as the end of a nightmare and the start of a new era of peace and normality. But normality had not yet fully returned. There were other Britons around, in

camouflage jackets and carrying weapons — members of the Nato force engaged in peacekeeping operations.

In less turbulent times the spectacular Adriatic coast was the main draw for tourists to Yugoslavia, and resentment that much of the revenue was going to distant Belgrade was certainly a factor in Croatia's decision to go it alone. But with the outbreak of hostilities tourism ceased abruptly, and the hotels became home to thousands of refugees.

Many refugees are still unable to return home, but Ulrich Hrvose, general manager of all the main hotels in the town of Makarska, is confident that they will soon be outnumbered by tourists.

"Realistically we expect a 20 to 30 per cent increase next year, and to be back up to 1990 levels in two or three years' time," he said.

"We are very happy to see Saga back, because our experience of British guests has been very good," he added. "We want to show people that Croatia is at peace and back to normal."

One couple happy to return were Brenda and James Best of Edinburgh, who had been to the Croatian coast at least once a year since 1984.

"Some of our friends were pretty surprised when we told them we were coming back," said Mr Best, "but we thought if Saga decided Croatia was safe, it would be."

Sally to axe Dunkirk ferry

By STEVE KEENAN

SALLY Ferries has found a new fast-craft partner and is set to axe its Ramsgate to Dunkirk services next spring.

The latest development in the cross-Channel ferry war yesterday resulted in Sally announcing a split from its Belgian partner RMT, to be

come effective from next

March. RMT will cease trading and its three ferries and two Jeefos sold. Sally will then team up with the Australian fast-ferry specialist Holyman to run 90-minute catamaran crossings from Ramsgate to Ostend.

The decision comes after losses caused by the opening

of the Channel Tunnel. Sally lost £2 million last year and saw passenger numbers drop by 25 per cent in the first six months of 1996.

Bill Moses, Sally chief executive, said: "This will allow us to stem losses and steal a march on the market. The industry needs action, not words."

Scheduled airlines cut Nice flights

By STEVE KEENAN

THREE scheduled airlines are likely to axe services to Nice this winter because of cut-price airline competition to the French Riviera. Air UK from Stansted and Air France from Heathrow are "reviewing" services and British Airways is ending flights from Gatwick. Air France is also cutting two other routes and taking on its first franchise airline outside France, Jersey European, to cut costs.

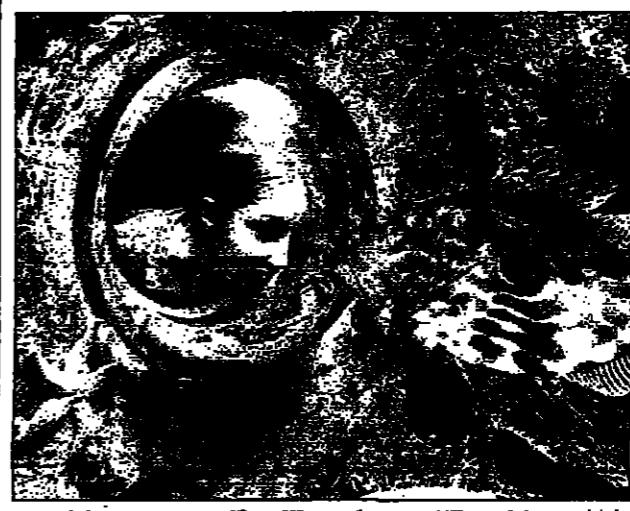
The decisions are partly based on the slump in holiday demand for France and the Riviera in particular. But the airlines may also have been hit by EasyJet, a low-cost carrier, selling seats from Luton for £49 one-way, which undercuts even charter prices.

Bluebird Holidays ran two charters a week from Birmingham, Manchester and Gatwick this summer, but competition persuaded it to axe the series for next summer.

Stephen Powell, Bluebird's managing director, said: "In August, we were selling seats at £149 that sold for £229 last year. People who would normally fly from Manchester were driving to Luton to take advantage of EasyJet prices."

Bluebird will continue to sell scheduled seats to Nice. Only BA and British Midland will operate scheduled flights there, from Heathrow, this winter.

The move by Air France is part of a wider strategy review as the airline looks to move out

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Visitors to Sea Life will reach 3.5 million this year

Closer encounters of a fishy kind

By WILLY NEWLANDS

SEA LIFE is Britain's top leisure attraction. Visitors to the 16 aquaria will top 3.5 million by the end of the season, with a further one million viewing the ocean tanks in Holland, Belgium and Spain.

The group's growth has been rapid since the day, only 17 years ago, when the first Sea Life Centre opened on the banks of Loch Creran, near Oban, Argyll.

The aquaria are all devoted to familiar British sea creatures but unusual presentations, such as the herring ring at Oban, in which 1,000 fish in their doughnut-shaped tank swim around the viewer, have drawn the crowds. The Oban centre became the West of Scotland's leading visitor attraction within a year.

The opening of the National Sea Life Centre in Birmingham this summer has achieved the aim of the owners, Dorset-based Vardon Attractions, by bringing an aquarium within easy reach of almost anywhere in England, Scotland and Wales.

Nick Varney, the managing director, says: "In many cases, such as the walk-through tunnels, visitors feel as if they are the ones enclosed, while the fish enjoy all the space they need, and more."

It is often the waist-high "sandy seabed" displays which captivate most visitors, with coffee-table sized rays nosing the surface to look at their admirers. Touch pools offer an opportunity to handle sturdy rockpool dwellers such as starfish, crabs and sea anemones.

The centres at Hunstanton, Oban and Scarborough have seal rescue and release operations.

The group has also achieved success with the

breeding of unusual fish, such as native seahorses, establishing techniques which will be used in conservation programmes. For further information ring 0800 600 900.

Ghana back on tourist map

By TONY DAWE

this week that its tours are sold out until January.

Ghana is enjoying stability under President Jerry Rawlings, who was elected democratically in 1992 after leading two successful coups, and

Afriwest Tours has decided the country is a perfect undeveloped holiday destination.

"Too much tourism in Africa is dominated by major companies and by those wishing to make quick money, so we looked for somewhere with a stable background which was eager to develop a tourism industry," said Veronica Reimond of Afriwest, in Mothamptom, Hereford.

Ghana is a beautiful country with tropical beaches, rainforests and the savannahs further north, and it also boasts a wealth of culture and long-standing links with Britain. Tours begin on November 4 with weekly Monarch Airlines flights from Gatwick to the capital, Accra, and include a range of two-centre trips in addition to beach

holidays. Prices range from £950 for flights and a four-night's four-star accommodation in Accra and either a beach resort or inland centre — with goldmines and monkey sanctuaries — to £450 for a week at a beach hotel.

Explore Worldwide reports that the response to its adventure tours to Uganda has been so great that they are sold out until next year. "Uganda is relatively small and all the highlights can be reached quite easily," said Derek Moore of Explore Worldwide. Prices for 17-day tours in January start at £1,045, including return flights, all travel, safari camps and meals.

A mass of water hyacinths carpet Lake Victoria in Uganda



A mass of water hyacinths carpet Lake Victoria in Uganda

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26 1996

BT and News International to launch Internet service

By ERIC REGALY

BRITISH TELECOM and News International are to launch an Internet service called Springboard, whose content will range from News International's titles, including *The Times*, to information about television programmes.

The 50-50 joint venture is scheduled for a January launch and will be sold on its own, although BT may eventually market it as a package with BT Internet. The Internet service it started in the spring.

Rupert Gavin, BT's director of multime-

dia services, would say only that the start-up costs would be a "sizeable sum", although it is understood to be less than £10 million.

Mr Gavin said that Springboard is designed for mass-market appeal and will be aimed at the 300,000 or so Britons who regularly use the Internet, the worldwide network of computers. BT believes that the number of Internet users will rise to as many as four million by 2000. "We want to get away from being a specialist service for nerds," he said.

Douglas Flynn, managing director of News International, said: "With News

International's expertise in publishing, multimedia and news gathering, and BT's experience in multimedia and communications, the new venture will establish a very attractive service for the UK market."

Springboard will initially draw content from *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Sun* and the *News of World*, and will work with partners to add weather, sport, the latest news, event listings and tickets, a reference library and other educational material. Other businesses within The News Corporation, which owns News International, might also provide services.

They might include content from HarperCollins, the book publisher, Fox Television, which produces *The X-Files*, and BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster that is 40 per cent owned by News International.

Delphi Creative, the News International company that designs Internet Web sites, will be absorbed into the BT-News International joint venture. Springboard is the latest in a series of multimedia ventures launched by News International. Others include Internet editions of *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, and News EyeQ, the online, business-to-business service.

□ BT is expected this morning to announce that it has formed a partnership with Générale des Eaux, the French utilities group that is mounting a challenge to France Telecom in the phone market. A French partner would fill a glaring hole in BT's European strategy. In the past two years it has formed telecoms joint ventures in Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and The Netherlands as part of its strategy to make continental Europe, in effect, part of its home market. It has been looking for a French partner for over a year and is also seeking ways into the Swiss and Belgian markets.

NatWest to shed £3.2bn in loans

By ROBERT MILLER

NATWEST, the UK's largest bank, is to shed £3.2 billion worth of company loans from its lending book and sell them on as a new type of security to other banks, building societies, pension funds and other international investors.

The move, which involves loans to 300 of the bank's larger and more creditworthy company customers, could pave the way for rival banks and City institutions to follow suit. This, in turn, could create a new market of tradeable corporate loan notes or securities worth up to £32 billion.

In the past NatWest has been criticised for failing to trim its corporate lending book, worth around £9.6 billion, fast enough, even though it has been cut by around £8

billion the bank will be able to free £250 million in capital that had been tied up as security to cover the loans.

Rose will have to pay NatWest for the loans, and to fund the purchase the new vehicle will issue sterling and US dollar-denominated floating rate notes and commercial paper into the Eurobond market, as well as the private placing market in the United States. This is a process known as "securitisation", more widely practised in the US than in the UK.

For investors who buy the Rose paper, the plus side is that they will receive the interest paid by companies on their loans. The downside is that if one of the borrowers defaults then the investor, rather than NatWest, will have to face the loss.

The NatWest Markets team led by Alby Cator, managing director of the bank's debt market group, that created Rose acknowledged that some corporate customers may feel that NatWest is trying to sever its links. More serious, however, are fears that buyers of new-style Rose securities may hold sway over how their loans are managed in future. But Mr Cator said that NatWest would continue to be the service agent and the point of contact with the company.

Derek Wanless, group chief executive of NatWest Group, did not rule out further acquisitions. "But if we find no immediate use for the extra capital we could return it to shareholders through a share buyback scheme similar to the £450 million exercise we conducted in August."

Rival UK banking houses broadly welcomed the NatWest move. Alan Brown, head of credit at Barclays, said: "We already have a somewhat similar vehicle with a company called Sheffield that raises money to buy the loans in the US commercial paper market."

Katherine Newton, bank analyst at UBS, the merchant bank, said: "It provides the best of both worlds where the bank keeps its relationship with customers without the negative effect on profitability."

Pennington, page 27



Derek Wanless, NatWest chief executive, said there had been no decision on what to do with the extra capital and did not rule out acquisitions.

Britain 'to top Euro economy league'

FROM ANATOLE KALETSKY IN WASHINGTON

BRITAIN is likely to have the most successful economy in Europe for the fourth year running in 1997, according to the International Monetary Fund. Its annual assessment of global economic prospects, published yesterday, says that Britain will enjoy a rapid economic growth rate, see a bigger threat than inflation to Germany and the rest of continental Europe. In an unusually open hunt to the Bundesbank, the IMF adds:

"It is still too early to conclude that the recent round of interest rate reductions in Germany has fully run its course."

The IMF says that the world economy will continue its

steady non-inflationary expansion, with the growth of world output accelerating from 3.5 per cent in 1995, to 3.8 per cent this year and 4.1 per cent in 1997. But this growth should become better balanced among the major regions, with the US and Asian developing countries slowing slightly, while Europe, Japan, Latin America and Africa all

accelerate. Russia should enjoy positive economic growth next year for the first time this decade.

Britain is forecast to grow by 3 per cent in 1997, putting it well ahead of the rest of Europe, and second only to Canada among the G7 countries. And while growth for Britain this year is put at only 2.2 per cent, this is still well

ahead of all the G7 countries apart from Japan and the US. The IMF also expects inflation in Britain to decline to 2.4 per cent, from 2.7 per cent. this year. Unusually, it does not seem to share the view of the Bank of England that Britain's interest rates are too low.

Michael Moussa, the IMF's chief economist, said that "British monetary policy is currently appropriate". Looking ahead to 1997, he added that there would need to be a "modest" firming of interest rates to stay within the Government's inflation target. He said there was no reason to expect sharply higher interest rates in either Britain or America, despite robust growth of demand and declining unemployment.

The IMF also refrained

from criticising the Federal Reserve's refusal to raise US interest rates this week. Mr Moussa said that a "slight" firming of US monetary policy in areas where it is firmly opposed to Labour. These include continuing the opt-out from the European social chapter, no statutory recognition of trade unions, and no minimum wage.

Ford has 30,000 people in factories across several regions. As well as Dagenham and Halewood, the company has main sites in Southampton, Bridgend and Swansea.

A spokesman said: "It is

part of the on-going drive for world-class efficiency levels. It is very important that all our plants can compete with other plants worldwide."

CBI urges prudent Budget

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Confederation of British Industry urged the Chancellor yesterday to bring forward a "prudent" Budget to ensure that public borrowing is brought back to a sustainable long-term path.

This would leave only "very limited" scope for tax cuts of £1 billion at most, the CBI said.

The employers' organisation cautioned against "radical" action and said the Government's real spending target should be cut by £2 billion.

Any relaxation of personal taxation should be directed towards higher personal allowances to take more people out of tax completely, rather than through lower basic rate of income tax, the CBI said.

Adair Turner, CBI director-general, said further reductions in spending might be achievable, but the CBI did not want cuts in education and training nor in spending on the country's transport infrastructure. □ Engineering companies

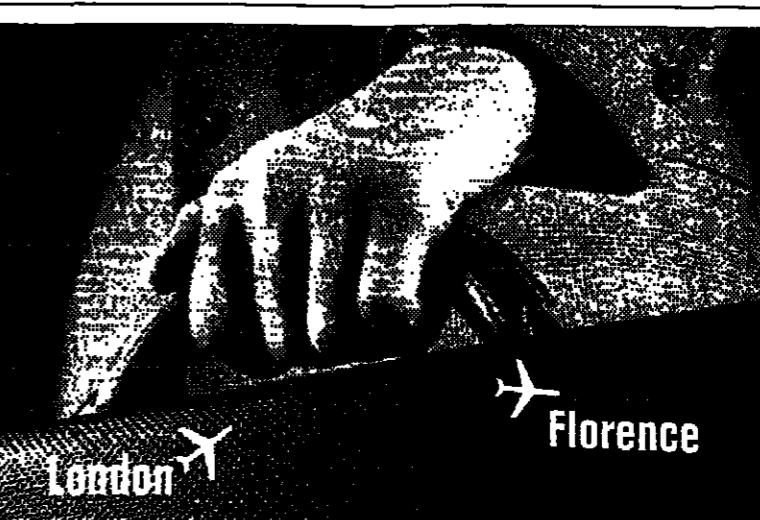
declared strong support for key aspects of Conservative policy yesterday in a pre-election business manifesto for the industry.

The EEF's election document, *Engineering: Creating Wealth for Our Future*, strongly supports some key aspects of Conservative policy in areas where it is firmly opposed to Labour. These include continuing the opt-out from the European social chapter, no statutory recognition of trade unions, and no minimum wage.

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Florence

PowerGen ends use of 'dirty fuel'

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

POWERGEN is to abandon oil-mulsion, the controversial cheap fuel from Venezuela, with the closure of the Ince power station, near Chester.

In March, the generator closed Richborough power station in Kent, another oil-fired plant adapted to burn oil-mulsion.

A spokesman said that PowerGen's use of oil-mulsion — dubbed "the world's dirtiest fuel" — had been undertaken as a long-term experiment, but there were now no plans to burn it. The move comes after criticism by environmentalists and legal action alleging damage from fuel tail-out.

PowerGen is to maintain capacity with the re-opening of a coal-fired unit at Fiddler's Ferry power station, near Warrington.

PowerGen has settled claims from car companies alleging paint erosion from the bitumen-based fuel. It faces claims from farmers in Kent alleging crop damage.

National Power was recently stopped from building a jetty at Millford Haven to import oil-mulsion for its Pembroke plant, but the generator is still keen to import the fuel.

Ince will close next March, at the end of a five-year contract for the fuel, with the loss of 41 jobs.



Sir Laurie Barratt, left, and Frank Eaton at Princes Riverside, Barratt's development at Rotherhithe, London

Institutions to get bulk of AEA shares in sell-off

BY PAUL DURMAN

PRIVATE investors will receive only about a fifth of the shares they applied for in AEA Technology, the nuclear decommissioning and waste management group and the Government's last privatisation before the general election.

Investors applying through their stockbrokers made offers for £156 million of shares, or seven times the number originally reserved for them. Although the Government's advisers increased the size of the "intermediaries' offer", from 10 per cent to 12.5 per cent of the total shares available, this still meant applications from private investors

had to be scaled back heavily. On average, private investors will receive 22 per cent of what they applied for. However, those who applied through large stockbrokers may receive less since large applications were capped at £7.5 million.

Ray Williams, an associate at Brewin Dolphin, the private client stockbroker, said: "A lot of our clients are not satisfied with what they've been allocated. Some of the holdings are fairly tiny. It will make it a very interesting after-market."

First dealings in the shares of AEA Technology will take place this morning, and they are thought likely to move quickly to a premium. J.

Henry Schroder, the merchant bank, priced the shares at 280p — at the top of the range that was only increased on Monday, just hours before the deadline for brokers' applications. The price values AEA Technology at £224 million.

Michael Read, head of private clients at Greig Middleton, the stockbroker, was irritated that the Government had invoked its right to increase the price of the shares at such a late stage, which left the firm no time to consult its clients. He said: "To change the price like that at the last minute shows a complete lack of understanding about the way the retail market works."

The flotation was heavily backed by AEA Technology's 3,300 staff, who will jointly receive nearly £5 million of shares, 2.2 per cent of the total. All but one of them took up their right to £160 of free shares, and 2,300 invested the maximum amount to take up their full £1.510 entitlement.

Peter Watson, AEA's chief executive, said that 2,200 staff had agreed to invest an average of £95 a month into a save-as-you-earn share scheme.

This was the equivalent of £1 million to £12 million over the next few years, he added. The bulk of AEA's shares will go to institutional investors who took part in the placing.

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Barratt says rivals paid too much for land banks

BY PAUL DURMAN

SIR Lawrie Barratt, chairman of Barratt Developments, yesterday accused other house-builders of overpaying for companies they have bought for their holdings of land.

Sir Lawrie said that 23 house-builders have been taken over in the last three years at prices that range from 15 to 85 per cent in excess of the stated value of their assets. He said Persimmon had paid £19 million too much for Ideal Homes, bought for £178 million in February.

If Persimmon want to throw away £19 million, there's nothing anyone can do about it, Sir Lawrie said. He also welcomed Tarmac's departure from housebuilding, since it was "notorious" for overpaying for land.

Barratt was reporting a 10.6 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £52.1 million for the year to June 30. Earnings rose 17 per cent to 17.8p a share.

The company completed 7,025 house sales, a 6 per cent improvement on the previous year. The average price also increased 6 per cent to £63,800. Group turnover increased 10 per cent to £634 million.

Although Barratt recently raised £90 million to expand its landbank, Frank Eaton, chief executive, said the company has retained tight control of spending. Land costs remained at 21.8 per cent of projected selling costs. Barratt has increased its land stocks to 20,200 plots. It ended the year with cash of £42 million.

Barratt plans to pay a final dividend of 5.5p on November 22, lifting the total payout 10 per cent to 8.25p a share.

Tempus, page 28

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

SFO chief calls for reform over trials

GEORGE STAPLE, Director of the Serious Fraud Office, yesterday called for changes to the way in which large and complex financial trials are conducted. In his first public comment since the collapse of the second Maxwell trial last week, Mr Staple told a London conference on combating financial crime that the system had become "emasculated". He said that some cases were so complex that it was impossible to reduce them to a point at which the whole indictment against the defendants could be tried in one trial, so these would be split into a series of trials. However, after last week's Maxwell ruling, in which the judge said that a second trial should be unusual, it was "unlikely" that second trials would ever take place. Mr Staple said.

German sick pay battle

A WAVE of German companies have followed Daimler-Benz by announcing cuts in sick pay, turning up the heat in a battle over liberalising restrictive work rules. Companies from Basf to Bayerische Vereinsbank and Mannesmann are to implement the law, beginning on October 1, that cuts sick pay from 100 per cent of normal wages to 80 per cent. Daimler's works council and unions were outraged. Officials said workers would refuse to work overtime and weekend shifts.

Gilts auction success

THE latest British gilts auction went well yesterday, with bids totalling 1.73 times the amount on offer. The sale of £3 billion 8 per cent ultra-long gilts due to mature in 2021 was mostly taken up by domestic pension funds and insurance companies, which need very long-dated bonds to match their liabilities. However, traders noted that gilts are still underperforming European bonds, which are profiting from a growing view that European monetary union will take place without Britain.

Alexon signals payouts

ALEXON, the fashion retailer rescued from near-collapse three years ago, has signalled a return to the dividend list after making profits of £3.03 million (£141,000) for the six months to July 27. Although no payout is proposed at the half-year, Alexon said that it intends to pay £3.4 million next March to preference shareholders, equivalent to 16.7p a share. Payments on ordinary shares are expected in the next half-year. Earnings per share of 4.16p compare with a 0.86p loss last time.

Circle buying film-maker

CIRCLE COMMUNICATIONS, the film and television rights owner, is acquiring Oxford Scientific Films, the wildlife film specialist, for £3.85 million. The deal expands Circle's wildlife films division, and marks the company's first acquisition since joining the Alternative Investment Market in July. OSF made pre-tax profits of £301,000 in 1995, on sales of £3.9 million. Circle's shares, which joined AIM at 170p, were unchanged at 180.1p yesterday.

Price Waterhouse pays

PRICE WATERHOUSE has agreed to pay £20 million in settlement of its long-running legal dispute with Ferruzzi, the Italian foods-to-chemicals group. The firm's practice in Italy was being sued for about £671 million for alleged negligence in its auditing of Ferruzzi, now known as Compart, and its main subsidiary, Montedison. PW admits no liability in making the proposed settlement, which is due to be put to shareholders in November.

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Questions over NatWest's innovative debt sale Company chiefs in the firing line Brent Walker's £6 million deadline

THE notion of wrapping debt up into a neat bundle and selling it off to blue-chip institutions looking for steady if unexciting returns is not a new one. But the innovative nature of the NatWest's debt sale raises the obvious question of why no bank in Europe has done anything quite like it before.

It also raises any number of other pertinent questions, most of which, the NatWest freely concedes, must remain unanswered at this early stage. Essentially, the bank is taking about a third of its corporate debt off the balance sheet by finding other holders willing to assume a degree of the risk. This should free capital to be used on other ventures which offer rather better returns.

The first question is the views of those debtors, who must be under the impression they had formed a relationship with the bank, and not with whoever their loans are passed on to. A similar securitisation of mortgage debt a few years back caused no end of upset, after all.

NatWest insists that those relationships will continue unchanged, which is not entirely candid: the loans are being shifted elsewhere because the margins in corporate lending, as the bank concedes, are insufficient to make such business worthwhile. So much for rela-

tionship banking; such custom as that, as the old song puts it, the banks can get any day.

The ultimate holders of the special purpose vehicles, or Repeat Offering Securitisation Entities (Roses), will presumably pay a discount to the loans' face value. This will be a small one because the debts, we are assured, are culled from the safer end of the corporate loan book.

Pass over the question whether any bank, in the light of recent history, is able to identify a safe loan from one about to disappear down a Eurotunnel-sized hole. Those ultimate holders will assume some risk, and want some matching rights as creditors. Suppose one of those copper-bottomed corporate borrowers, at a later date, goes under. Rather than dealing with the one bank, any future financial reconstruction will have to heed the views of any number of ROSE holders.

NatWest's loan book will also be skewed. Plain common sense suggests that if you cream off the safest third, the remaining two thirds carries a higher risk. Not so, says the bank; why not? And what do the credit rating agen-

cies have to say about that remaining debt?

Then there is the matter of just what NatWest, whose loan-to-asset ratios are already more than acceptable, wants to do with the capital freed. Only a month ago, the bank was using surplus funds to buy back its shares. Perhaps it has since identified some grand new investment. The danger is that NatWest will end up swapping a low-risk, low return asset for a high-risk venture of unquantified returns. We have been there before, and the lesson learned from Third World debt, Crocker et al is that caution has its attractions.

Go-going, going...?

AT least two chief executives of middle-ranking British companies live in fear of losing their jobs. They continue to cling to office, but no one is giving terribly good odds on the survival of Alan Bowkett at Berisford and Peter Aikens at Matthew Clark.

The parallels between the two

bullish trading statement since from Bass, perpetrator of the market leader in alco-pops, Hooper's Hooch, may have buttressed his position. Odds on his survival: maybe 40 per cent.

Berisford's own warning drew attention to a strike, which can perhaps happen to anyone these days, and a hitherto undetected weakness in the American restaurant market — undetected, that is, by the big restaurant chains who buy Berisford's fast-food kit. The institutions would like to know what really is wrong, and Mr Bowkett has not left too many friends behind in the wake of his meteoric rise to this point. Survival odds: no better than 20 per cent.

The closest parallel between Clark and Berisford, though, is that both have been heavily promoted for their growth prospects, which have been fuelled by bundles of City cash. These are precisely the sort of businesses that came nastily unstuck in the late 1980s, in the wake of the last market crash. Bull markets are nervous places, witness both companies' share plunges, and they are unforgiving of those

who fall behind. The bosses of several other go-go concerns will be watching developments at the two with interest.

Russian roulette

THE new Russia is a tough place to do business, and some has clearly rubbed off on George Walker, if the former boxer ever needed another injection of toughness. There was much puzzlement on Tuesday when he threatened, on being awarded more than £6 million by a French court, to put Brent Walker into receivership if the money was not paid.

This would have forced an orderly sale of the remaining parts of his former empire, the Pubmaster chain and the William Hill betting shops. The problem was that the banks were already staging an orderly asset sale. They had no hope of getting back — the two between them are probably not worth half that — but most had been written off anyway. The arrival of a receiver

to carry out the same task would not benefit Mr Walker. On receivership he would merely be just another unsecured creditor, owed £6 million and with no chance of getting it back.

Yesterday Mr Walker gave the banks a week to put this sum into escrow pending legal appeals, or he would pull the rug. But it seems that those asset sales are not the only benefit locked away within Brent Walker: there are £200 million of tax losses available to the banks. These disappear, it is argued, on receivership. £6 million is a relatively paltry sum, by comparison. It might just be in the interest of the banks, who threw Mr Walker out of the company he created five years ago, to pay up. Nice tax loss you've got here, Guv. Wouldn't want anything to happen to it.

Gloom and boom

A FUTUROLOGIST consultancy, Market Dynamics, has invented a new category to go with dinkies, yuppies and all the other social tribes. Despite the general economic well-being half of us, apparently, fear for our financial future, and two fifths worry about crime. The trend is strongest among those born in the baby-boom years just after the War. Those baby-boomers are now baby-gloomers.

Ibstock issues warning after first-half fall

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

A WEAK bricks market and poor pulp prices were held up as major problems for Ibstock when it gave warning that profits this year would not match last year's.

Ibstock, the United Kingdom's second-biggest bricks company after Hanson, delivered its warning after reporting an 82 per cent slump in first-half pre-tax profits to £2.4 million.

The company said that for entry, which in the first six months fell into a £1.3 million loss from a comparable profit of £6 million, was unlikely to recover its loss. The bricks business, meanwhile, faced improving but difficult markets. Ibstock said that pre-tax profits for the full year would be "significantly" lower than last year's £16.7 million.

Although signs of life are being reported in house-building, Sir Colin Hope, Ibstock's chairman, said that UK brick despatches this year were forecast to be the lowest on record. He said the general

outlook was improving but "only gradually, and from a low base".

In the first half, Ibstock was hit by low demand in UK bricks and harsh weather in the US, leading to the temporary halting early this year of brick production. Results were also hit by highly volatile pulp prices. The company said pulp prices over the past year had soared to \$1,000 per tonne but had then slumped to \$400 per tonne. Sales fell 38 per cent to £22 million.

The company bought Redland's brick division earlier this year and is looking to make annual cost savings of £6 million from fusing the businesses. It said that it was on target to realise these savings by next year, having bought the operation in July. So far, three factories have been closed.

Ibstock froze its interim dividend at 0.75p a share, payable on December 2.

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Clarke plea on money laundering

By OLIVER AUGUST

KENNETH CLARKE, the Chancellor, will urge Commonwealth finance ministers today at their annual conference in Bermuda to adopt a tough new code to fight money laundering, said to be the world's third-largest industry.

The Treasury has designed an "anti-money laundering tool kit" for developing countries. It includes a comprehensive list of measures to keep out or detect the proceeds from criminal activities.

The kit is based on successful measures adopted in the Treasury's fight to keep drug money out of Britain. It details how governments can make laws against different forms of money-laundering and techniques for investigating illegal cash flows.

Mr Clarke will ask finance ministers to follow the example of the Cayman Islands which established a new Monetary Authority this week.

Oriental to go for £14m flotation

By FRASER NELSON

ORIENTAL Restaurant Group is taking its four-strong chain of Chinese and Thai eateries to the stock market via a flotation valuing the company at £14.7 million.

Hock Ann Chua, an accountant who co-founder and managing director, will be made a paper millionaire by the placing, which values his 11.2 per cent stake at £1.64 million.

The company is raising £4 million from the float to double the number of restaurants in two years and expand its wholesale activities.

In the year to March 31, Oriental made profits of £646,000 before tax, on sales of £4.48 million. This left earnings of 8.2p per share.

Greg Middleton has placed 2.6 million shares with institutions at 154p each. They begin trading next Thursday.

City diary, page 29

GrandMet disposes of Pearle for £140m

GRAND METROPOLITAN, the food and drinks conglomerate, has sold Pearle on the American eye care business earmarked for disposal since 1993 (George Sivell writes).

Coat National Corporation, one of the big players in the US eye care market, is to pay £140 million for Pearle, which has 183 outlets in Europe and a further 692 in North America and the Caribbean.

Cole operated more than 1,000 optical stores under the names Sears Optical, Montgomery Ward Vision Centre, BJ's Optical and Target Optical. It is getting Pearle for

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Vodafone falls as big investor unloads stock

SHARES of Vodafone, the mobile telephone operator, were left hovering just 71p above their low after one big institutional shareholder unloaded a large holding on the market.

BZW is believed to have picked up almost 20 million shares, less than 1 per cent of the company, at 215p, as part of a bought deal before selling them on to various institutional clients at 218p. That is a cool profit of about £600,000.

But the move left Vodafone nursing a fall of 3p at 219p as a total of 45 million shares were traded. That compares with a high for the year of 265p and underlines market worries about the problems of increased competition.

However, the fall in the share price will come as little surprise to Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, which has been a bear of Vodafone for some time. It has been telling clients that Vodafone will struggle to increase market share short-term.

Elsewhere in the telecom sector, BT ended 5p lower at 362p with the market poised for a major announcement from the company later this morning. Whispers circulating around the Square Mile last night suggested BT is expected to unveil details of a £1 billion deal which might involve the purchase of another company in the US or Europe.

Share prices generally bounced back as uncertainty over the outlook for interest rates during the next few months eased. The decision of the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee to peg rates at current levels was warmly received. Prices in London were chased higher and closed just below their best of the day with a rise in the FT-SE 100 index of 25.2 at 3,935.7. A total of 691 million shares changed hands.

Among leaders, P&O rose a further 13p to 595p on the back of encouraging traffic numbers and "buy" recommendations from both Panmure Gordon, the broker and rival UBS. But Hanson fell 4p to a new low 152p. Shares of its Millennium Chemical division have been heading south on the grey market in New York ahead of the proposed demerger.

National Westminster Bank rose 14p to 676p after reshuffling its 55 billion of corporate loans to free up to £250 million of extra capital. The money may be used to buy back its own shares.

Kwik Save dropped 25p to 341p on the back of a "sell" recommendation from Credit Lyonnais Laing. It has been telling clients the shares are overvalued, currently trading at a 20 per cent premium to the rest of the market. It says the shares should be sold down to



Railtrack rose 2p on good news from Robert Horton

million of extra capital. The shares rose 71p to 143p.

Norish, the Irish cold storage group, was rewarded with a rise of 10p to 85p after reporting a return to the black in the first six months.

Still reflecting Tuesday's figures, McKechnie rose 18p to 569p.

Some positive comments about second-half trading lifted Brake Brothers 5p to 749p.

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The City gave a cautious thumbs-up to full-year figures from Barratt Developments up 6p at 274½p, while pre-tax profits grew £5 million to £52.1 million despite the dull back drop to the housebuilding industry. The group reassured brokers by telling them it had added to its land bank without paying over the odds.

Brokers shrugged off a drop in profits from Harrison & Crosfield, the building products and animal feeds group, at the halfway stage. The shares rose 7½p to 143p.

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THE TIMES



CITY DIARY

Wedded to his work

PETER Middleton, who was partying at home until 11.30 on Monday night after his wedding in Fulham, has postponed his honeymoon to ensure he does not miss a quarterly staff meeting at Salomon Brothers.

Instead, the former Lloyd's chief executive will take a long weekend in October and whisk his bride, Anita, to Paris on her first visit to the romantic city.

David Potter, chairman and chief executive of Guinness Mahon, was among the crowd that gathered to admire Middleton in his wedding togs. Although the suit was old, Middleton assures me that the red tie was new. He bought it on his way through Frankfurt airport last Saturday, after a tour of Salomon Brothers' new offices in Germany.

Fat-cat caution

MICHAEL Paterson, co-founder of the Oriental Restaurant Group, was boasting yesterday that he receives only £24,000 a year as finance director. The Oxford graduate and former stockbroker, who is set to float the company at a value of £14.7 million, said he would not accept a penny more. Lunching at Imperial City, 48-year-old Paterson said: "People do take high salaries for non-risk jobs in the City and I think it's wrong... Somebody else could do my job if they were a qualified accountant." He added, however, that it was quite all right to maintain a 9.32 per cent stake in the company, which will be worth £1.37 million on flotation.



"Let's say we are broadly in line with expectations"

Written off

A thief found rich pickings from Flemings, from which 200 rollerball pens bearing the "Fleming Sealed" pension scheme name have been stolen. The investment house is offering a £50 reward after the pens went from a van parked in a west London street before a conference for company pension-scheme managers. "It was very upsetting," says Philip Beale, a Flemings director, who says that each pen cost £2 to replace.

Trump card

While Diana, Princess of Wales, is fund-raising across the Atlantic, she and Marla Maples may wish to find a quiet corner in Manhattan and ponder credit cards. The Princess had her Harvey Nichols store card refused, and Donald Trump's wife has now had a similar experience at her hairdresser's, according to US reports. Marla was thought to be "double dipping" because her secretary was using her Visa card at the same time, to order household goods for her boss.

Professor Patrick Minford, adviser to the Chancellor, received an apology last night from hosts of a dinner he addressed. Tim Lewis, planning manager at RBS Advanta, regretted sending invitations to hear "Sir" Patrick Minford at the launch of the RBS Advanta Gold Card. "I am profoundly apologetic, but believe it will only be a matter of time," he said sourly.

MORAG PRESTON

Benefits abound when the boss is just the hired help

Ian Brodie on the trend for companies to appoint temps in top jobs

Charlie Farrell is an executive temp. With 30 years of experience in management, he answered the call from a troubled furniture manufacturer in California for an interim chief executive officer. He saved the company, Tropitone Furniture, by reducing its bloated inventory, improving delivery times and making a quarter of the employees redundant. Then he organised his own departure by finding a permanent chief executive to take his place. The board was so impressed that they asked him to stay on as part-time chairman.

Temporary work is no longer just for typists. Mr Farrell is part of a burgeoning trend in the US and, increasingly, in Europe. Companies are turning to highly paid, up-market temps with specialist skills to help them out of a hole or to take on a particular project.

The search for brains to rent for a limited time has spawned a thriving new category of temping agencies.

They employ recruiters who must be highly knowledgeable about the nuances of finding exactly the right corporate stop-gap, often in a hurry. Putting a wanted advertisement in a shop window or the local paper is not the answer any more. In this exalted realm, a likely prospect often needs to be wooed over lunch with promises of a growing resume of top-notch jobs, albeit held briefly.

A striking example of a company turning to an outside executive for temporary help was last week's appointment by PepsiCo Inc of Karl von der Heyden to be chief financial officer and vice-chairman for a year. A former chief of RJR Nabisco, his main roles at Pepsi will be to help to chart a strategy in the wake of several operational problems and to find a "world-class" chief financial officer to succeed him. Wall Street approved of the idea. The company's shares promptly jumped 50 cents to \$29.50.

In Mr Farrell's case, he is 66 and would probably be considered obsolete in a traditional career structure. As a temp-in-charge, it took him 30 months to turn Tropitone around, but since then he has served as trouble-shooter at two other companies, each worth \$50 million, that were on the brink of foreclosure. He claims to have an intuitive sense of sizing up a problem and then deciding how to modernise operations, sales, marketing and finance. He said: "It's called crisis management, and when the crisis is over I leave."

Paul Dinte, an Australian in his thirties, owns an executive temping agency in Washington that after three years employs 17 people. He is currently looking for an interim executive to oversee the retooling and development of a corporation during a planned growth spurt. The assignment will be for three to six months. Mr Dinte must decide if any of the freelance executives on his books fit the bill or whether his



Sales director Roy Smith, redundant and desperate, took to the road near Cheltenham before finding new work

researchers should try to uncover a new candidate.

The idea of executive temping first occurred to Mr Dinte when he was working in the City of London for a firm of financial advisers. One day he was sent out as a consultant to a company handling insurance, a subject about which he knew nothing. He became convinced consultants were over-rated and that their role could be performed more effectively and cheaper in the short term by implementers with the right hands-on experience.

Mr Dinte described a changing employment market at the top: "The gold watch club is dead. Corporations are into downsizing and are no longer prepared to keep masses of people on the payroll for ever."

Expanding companies, opting for flexibility, now seek interim managers and project leaders for specific tasks. The phenomenon cuts across many industries, but is especially prevalent in chemicals, plastics, finance, telecommunications, law firms, retailing and health care.

The shift from lifetime service with one company to a career punctuated by rapidly changing jobs is chronicled in *The Portable Executive* by John Thompson, a pioneer of interim management and chairman of Imcor Inc., a leading temp agency. He is a proponent of executives building their own job security by moving from corporate dependency to self-direction.

He found that layoffs at America's top companies had reached an average of 2,600 a day, creating far more qualified managers and executives

than permanent openings for them to fill. Yet in a flourishing economy the very corporations that were cutting back now have a rising demand for managerial skills on an as-needed basis.

Mr Thompson forecasts an era of far greater mobility among executives as they move from one assignment to the next. He has observed that many benefit from their new-found professional independence and enjoy greater levels of personal satisfaction. They are often far better off financially. He admits, though, that some find it nerve-wracking to be worrying all the time about their next assignment.

In addition to finding executives, the expanding temporary placement firms also fill thousands of specialist professional slots. Interim Services, a big staffing company in Florida, provides doctors for clinics at 160 General Motors factories around the US. A California company, On Assignment Inc., has nearly 50 branches supplying chemists, biologists and other scientists for laboratory jobs lasting two weeks to four months. As an example, a pharmaceutical company recently took on a team of temps to shepherd a new prescription drug through the laborious approval process required by the US Food and Drug Administration.

As with Mr Farrell, outstanding temps are often taken on the staff. In the highest executive categories, about a third get offers. Annual receipts from temping have reached close to \$40 billion a year in the US. The number of

Americans working as temps on any given day exceeded two million for the first time last year. Of these, 120,000, or 6 per cent, were in the professional category, up from 25 per cent five years ago. Demand continues to grow. Unemployment has dropped to 5 per cent, a seven-year low, making the search for skilled staff increasingly difficult. Ray Marc, chief executive of Interim Services, reckons there will be five million temps in the US by 2000, with Europe following suit. He said: "We've already seen tremendous changes. A few years ago we thought of temps as holiday replacements or people between jobs. Now companies are paying a premium to utilise the skills of highly-qualified people, but only when necessary."

Top-drawer temping is promoted by the agencies as offering an enhanced lifestyle and greater flexibility than a regular nine-to-five grind. It enables young mothers with law degrees to work 25 hours a week and still be home in time to meet their children on the school bus. It allows physicians in their fifties to work eight months a year and spend the other four sailing.

There is a dark side to this rosy picture. Would-be temps need to seek out reputable agencies that offer pension rights and health coverage. Even then, the employees often pay a fair greater contribution themselves than in staff jobs where employers pick up a large share of the tab. Indeed, the main reason why so many firms are turning to high-grade temps for help is that they get the job done quickly with no recurring, hefty payroll costs.

BUSINESS LETTERS

British Gas defends the quality of a phone service under pressure

From Mr Roger Wood

Sir, We strongly disagree with the comment made in your newspaper (*The Times*, September 24), attributed to Ian Powe, that our telephone system has collapsed. This may have caused unnecessary distress to our customers.

Every day, the majority of customer calls are being answered at each of our Area Service Centres. We take around 14 million calls from our customers every year and we aim to answer each one within a reasonable time, mostly within 30 seconds. On the day your columnist contacted us (Monday, September 23) we answered over 73,000 telephone inquiries from our customers and our engineers carried out over 40,000 jobs.

While we acknowledge we are falling short of the telephone answering target we carried over 40,000 jobs. While we acknowledge we are falling short of the telephone answering target we carried over 40,000 jobs.

set ourselves, we are confident that the situation will improve soon. We apologise to any customers who have experienced difficulties in contacting us and would reassure them that we are doing everything possible. We have started to recruit additional staff to help with the difficulties we are experiencing, and we are making substantial investments in our communications systems, both between our offices and our engineers.

As a result, we are determined that we will rapidly return to the high standards of telephone answering which we have set ourselves, and which our customers expect of us.

Yours faithfully,

ROGER WOOD,
Managing Director,
British Gas,
30 The Causeway,
Staines, Middlesex.

All lines of communication exhausted

From Mr Richard Fortin

Sir, The British Gas switchboard is clearly overwhelmed by calls, presumably from customers with problems that they cannot solve through the normal channels. The impression given is of an organisation in total chaos, if not near to collapse.

I have been trying to get through to British Gas Services on and off all week on 0345 365100 to ask why they keep sending me different requests for payment for apparently different service contracts when I have already paid them. The number is constantly engaged.

I have already tried to

phone the emergency breakdown number under the contract — 0645 500400 but the number holds you in a queue for up to half an hour.

I have tried to phone the number given in the phone book for customer calls from the Putney area — 081 640 3311 — but that holds you in a queue and then cuts you off. The same thing happened when I asked the Adelphi switchboard to put me through to your office.

What do I do next? I feel like someone in a maze from which there is no exit. Yours faithfully,

RICHARD FORTIN,

5 Deafley Road,

Putney SW15.

Tradepoint test for fund managers

From Mr R. L. Galkoff

Sir,

How can you say that Welwyn Garden City only offers a Sainsbury and a Waitrose (Diary, September 18)? Look a little closer and you'll find you can buy the country's most popular sandwich (prawn mayo) for £1.19 at the country's biggest sandwich retailer. Who, I hear you ask? Marks & Spencer, of course.

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT L GALKOFF

9 The Hollies,

Oakleigh Park North,

N20 9HD.

Pay as you earn?

From Paul Fisher

Sir,

Peter Young may have paid £200,000 a year before he was sacked by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, but I question whether you are correct in stating that he earned it.

Yours faithfully,

PAUL FISHER,

24 Northumberland Place,

WN2 5BS.

Letters to the Business and Finance section can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5112.

Packer keeps Australia guessing about where he will spend his money

Cash-rich player rides out for takeover game



Kerry Packer, the media tycoon, has never been very good at staying out of the limelight for long. An inveterate gambler and polo player, Mr Packer hits the headlines down under as much for his flamboyant private life as for his corporate manoeuvres, and the revelation that he bought 300 pairs of cashmere socks from a gentleman's outfitter on his most recent trip to London has only served to fuel the myth that this is a man who does not do things by halves.

This time round, however, the Australian rumour mill has gone into overdrive with suggestions that Mr Packer is on the verge of making his next big move.

In the past month, Consolidated Press Holdings (CPH), Packer's private company, has amassed almost A\$300 million (£150 million) in cash from the sale of strategic assets — namely a 15 per cent stake in Crown Casino, a Melbourne casino operator, for A\$204 million and the sale of a 4.8 per cent stake in Fairfax, the newspaper group, most of which was reshuffled into Publishing and Broadcasting Limited (PBL). Mr Packer's family controlled public company, for A\$91 million.

Fuelling speculation further, Consolidated Press said that the reduction of its stake in Crown Casino — it still has almost 10 per cent — "was motivated by the wish to liquidity some of its assets for use in other transactions".

PBL has also been cash-raising, selling its 8 per cent shareholding in Village Road

for A\$110 million. Its directors have indicated that they are looking for a third business arm for the group, in media or entertainment. Analysts believe they have the ability to spend up to A\$1 billion. On past performance, it may not be long before Mr Packer makes his move. Every recent rationalisation of the Packer portfolio has been followed soon after by a large investment. The sale of A\$3 billion of assets between 1990 and 1992 for example — described as the world's biggest garage sale — was quickly followed by a surprise A\$500 million raid on Westpac, the Australian bank. Mr Packer has made no secret of the fact that at the root of his

year. Such a move would ultimately make PBL the largest shareholder, with a 33 per cent stake.

Beyond PBL, analysts suggest that Mr Packer could be considering something far more exciting for CPH, his private company, particularly now that Brian Powers, his right-hand man, is spending more time organising CPH's affairs. High on the list, say analysts, could be a UK acquisition, especially now that Bruce Gyngell, fellow Australian and former employee, is at the helm of Yorkshire Television. Mr Gyngell was the first person to appear on Australian television, on Mr Packer's Nine network in 1956, — a feat that has left him with the label Mr Television in Australia. He has worked on and off for Mr Packer ever since. One analyst said: "The UK television market is a very real possibility for Packer and it would make a lot of sense. Television is currently one of the most buoyant markets in the UK." He noted that ACP, Mr Packer's magazine arm, already has extensive interests in the UK market, which, subject to the constraints of British media ownership rules, could pave the way for an entry into television.

Another strong possibility is that Mr Packer will finally make a move into casinos, something he has been keen to do since he lost the bid for the only Sydney Casino licence to a rival consortium. Mr Packer has made it clear that reducing his stake in Crown Casino was in no way a reflection on his confidence in the company

share dilution system, which would make it difficult for Mr Packer to acquire a large stake, prompting speculation that he could be casting his eye over US casino operators instead. A third option would be expansion into Asia — Mr Powers is also chairman of Hellman and Friedman, the Asian arm of US investment house, and is believed to be looking at regional opportunities for Mr Packer.

Economic View will now appear on Fridays

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from Flemings, from which 200 rollerball pens bearing the "Fleming Sealed" pension scheme name have been stolen. The investment house is offering a £50 reward after the pens went from a van parked in a west London street before a conference for company pension-scheme managers. "It was very upsetting," says Philip Beale, a Flemings director, who says that each pen cost £2 to replace.

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MORAG PRESTON

Chief who quit Rover to head Concentric

By OUR CITY STAFF

JOHN TOWERS, the former chief executive of Rover Group, was yesterday named chief executive of Concentric, the UK engineering firm. He will take up his appointment on October 1.

Concentric, based at Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, manufactures a diverse range of products, from car parts to chocolate moulds. The company had turnover of £142 million in the year to September 30, 1995, compared with Rover's 1995 turnover of £5.6 billion.

Concentric's top post is being vacated by Robert Bruce, who assumed command in October last year from its overseas division and is returning to the US for family reasons.

Mr Towers' departure from Rover, on June 1, came after rumoured tensions with BMW, the firm's German parent company, which took over the British car maker two years ago.

Mr Towers had been seen as a potential candidate for chief executive of LucasVarity, the group formed by the merger of Lucas Industries and Varity of the US, a post now held by Victor Rice, after George Simpson's move from Lucas to GEC.

Last month, Mr Towers joined the private equity arm of Hambrus, the merchant bank, as a special adviser on a venture capital fund.

Mr Towers has previously held senior positions with Land Rover, Massey Ferguson Tractors, Canada's Varsity Corporation and Perkins Engines, in Peterborough.



Richard Collard, left, the outgoing chairman, with Gerry Clements, managing director, at Creighton's factory in Storrington, West Sussex

Harcros hit by sluggish construction market

By OLIVER AUGUST

HARRISONS & Crosfield, the chemicals to building supplies group, was hit by a sluggish construction market and the impact of the beef crisis, in the six months to end June 1996.

The group reported a slight fall in pre-tax profits but in the second half expects a clear improvement on last year.

Pre-tax profits fell from £6.4 million to £6.4 million, but the group emphasised that last year had seen an unusually large increase in profits. Earnings per share dropped from 5.9p to 5.7p, and the

interim dividend was maintained at 3.6p.

The main reason for the fall in profits was the depression in the European construction sector.

Bill Turcan, the chief executive, said: "During the six months, three out of our four divisions made good progress. Timber and building supplies had a difficult half year but the steps we have taken to restructure this business are now taking effect, and the current results are on an improving trend."

Operating profits in timber

and building supplies declined from £12.2 million in the first half of 1995 to £2.7 million in 1996. Harcros, the builders merchant, saw turnover decline by almost 20 per cent, from £250 million to £200 million.

Harcros's operating profits were squeezed by almost 50 per cent, down by £4.5 million to £5.1 million. The other building suppliers in the group, Moore's and K & B, also saw a sharp downturn, leading to a total fall in operating profits of 78 per

cent. Harcros was also hit by the costs and disruption created through restructuring. Harrisons, the manufacturer of toiletries, soaps and fragrances, has now installed new management IT systems.

The food division suffered from a slump in demand for animal feed in the aftermath of the crisis over BSE in beef. Overall operating profits in agriculture and food increased from £14.5 million to £18.8 million but BOCM Pauls, the pet food supplier, had to cope with a 28 per cent fall in operating profit from animal feed. The group does not expect the situation to improve in the near future. Operating profits in the plantations division increased by 14 per cent and in the chemicals division by 24 per cent.

The group is still looking for a new finance director and is currently interviewing candidates.

Mr Turcan said that further investments in the malt division may be sensible. "These are good businesses. We are not throwing good money after bad."

branded products, which range from weekend breaks to complete travel and accommodation packages, had performed particularly well in the British market, with a 35 per cent increase in room sales.

Overall turnover for the six months rose from £13.2 million to just over £13.9 million.

Mr McCarthy said: "Our

strategy of providing superior-quality full-service hotels puts us in a strong position to meet competition from the increasing number of low-priced hotel development offering basic facilities.

"The strong trading conditions are continuing, and we look forward to an excellent result for the full year."

Change of chairman at Creighton's

By MARTIN BARROW

RICHARD COLLARD resigned yesterday as chairman of Creighton's Naturally, the manufacturer of toiletries, soaps and fragrances. His departure was announced as the company revealed that its first-half profits would fall below those reported for the comparable period of 1995.

Mr Collard, who took the company to the stock market in 1988, is succeeded with immediate effect by John Carr as executive chairman.

The company also announced that Mr Carr had acquired 500,000 Creighton's shares from Mrs Glenda Collard, representing 10.7 per cent of the company, at 25p a share. In addition, Mr Collard has granted Ivory & Sims UK Discovery Trust an option over a further 500,000 Creighton's shares, exercisable up to October 31. Mr and Mrs Collard continue to hold 10.1 per cent of the company.

Shares of Creighton's fell 6p to 54p yesterday. In the first half of last year the company earned pre-tax profits of £773,000. The company's products are supplied to a number of supermarket chains and high street retailers.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Helical Bar enjoys 90% success rate

HELICAL BAR, the property development and investment company, said that about 90 per cent of the 930,000 sq ft of developments the group had completed or was still constructing was either pre-sold or in partnership with institutions. During the first half, the company sold £1.35 million of investment and trading property. Since July 1, the company had agreed further sales of more than £10.9 million of industrial and retail property. The total development programme of more than 2.2 million sq ft would have an eventual end value of more than £400 million, it said.

Pre-tax profits rose to £4.4 million, from £4.25 million, in the half-year to July 31. Earnings, fully diluted, fell to 9.5p a share from 12.6p, reflecting tax changes made at the last Budget. The interim dividend is increased 8.6 per cent to 3.15p a share, due November. Net assets were 334p a share at July 31 compared with 330p a year ago. The shares rose 5p to 395p.

BTR stake in China

BTR'S Automotive Systems Group, supplier of car-sealing systems and anti-vibration components, has acquired a majority stake in Wuxi CSH, an automotive vibration-control joint venture in China, for \$13 million. Wuxi is a sole supplier to Volkswagen and Audi in the region. The venture has enjoyed a turnover of more than \$14 million this year. The company, which employs 800, makes moulded rubber and rubber-to-metal bonded parts for sub-assemblies.

Beef ban lifts Global

GLOBAL Group, the meat importing company, was a net beneficiary of the ban on exports of British beef. The sharp rise in demand for pork, poultry and lamb resulted in a 34 per cent rise in sales, to £73.4 million, in the six months to June 30. Pre-tax profits rose by 42 per cent, to £1.2 million, from £842,000 in the previous first half. Earnings rose to 0.54p a share from 0.42p. There is an interim dividend of 0.21p a share (0.20p).

Brake Bros profits rise

BRAKE BROS, the food supplier to the catering industry, increased pre-tax profits to £12.4 million from £11.6 million in the six months to June 30. The company said that Puritan Maid, acquired from Forte in November, achieved sales of £58.8 million but incurred an operating loss of £1 million. Sales, mainly dependent on Forte volume, were lower than expected. Earnings were 15.8p a share (14.7p). The interim dividend is increased to 2.9p a share (2.7p), payable December 31.

Reg Vardy accelerates

REG VARDY, the automotive distributor, said new vehicle sales were up 11 per cent on a like-for-like basis, excluding acquisitions, in the opening weeks of the company's financial year. Sales of used vehicles were up 27 per cent. Peter Vardy, chairman, told the annual meeting yesterday the roles of chairman and chief executive would be split, with Graeme Potts, currently managing director, becoming chief executive.

PGA takes golf stake

PGA European Tour Courses, the golf courses owner and operator, has acquired the outstanding 50 per cent interest in European Tour Club Stockholm, for £3.11 million, taking the company's interest to 100 per cent. The 36-hole golf complex is due to host the Scandinavian Masters in 1998. PGA, formerly Union Square, reported pre-tax profits of £1.02 million for the six months to June 30, from £453,000. Earnings were 0.18p a share (0.30p). There is again no interim dividend.

Tourism boom helps Ryan Hotels

FROM EILEEN McCABE
IN DUBLIN

IRELAND'S tourism boom helped Ryan Hotels to record a 31 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits, the company said yesterday.

The Irish chain, which has five hotels in major cities throughout the country and

one each in Amsterdam, Brussels and Hamburg, recorded a profit of £1.6 million for the six months to July. Earnings per share jumped to 12.18p, from 11.68p, and the interim dividend rises 25 per cent, to 10.62p, payable on November 22.

Conor McCarthy, chairman, said the company's

branded products, which range from weekend breaks to complete travel and accommodation packages, had performed particularly well in the British market, with a 35 per cent increase in room sales.

Overall turnover for the six months rose from £13.2 million to just over £13.9 million.

Mr McCarthy said: "Our

strategy of providing superior-quality full-service hotels puts us in a strong position to meet competition from the increasing number of low-priced hotel development offering basic facilities.

"The strong trading conditions are continuing, and we look forward to an excellent result for the full year."

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"The strong trading conditions are continuing, and we look forward to an excellent result for the full year."

Shed light on foreign firms

The UK needs a level playing field in the world of financial disclosure,

Martin Scicluna argues

BRITISH companies are often surprised at the sparseness of financial information on competitors and new trading partners on the Continent.

Many directors believe that the highly developed reports and accounts published by UK companies put them at a disadvantage to European counterparts. A Deloitte & Touche survey indicates that this view has substance – UK companies are required to disclose key information that other European companies are not.

The survey covered the reports and accounts of 40 major companies, ten from each of the UK, Germany, France and Italy. Eighteen disclosures of information that might aid competitors and/or trading partners were given scores, ranging from zero for no information to one for reasonably full disclosure. The maximum possible scores were 18 for a company and 180 per country.

The scores ranged from 42 for Italy to 147 for the UK. France and Germany scored 63 and 68 respectively. Scores of individual companies ranged from zero for an Italian company to 16.4 for a UK company.

There was no category in

which the UK lagged the other three countries, although standards vary quite widely from company to company. Clearly, overall, the quality of disclosures required of UK companies is far higher than that of our European partners.

However, the remedy for lack of comparable information is not easy, assuming the UK is not willing to let its high standards slip. It has been argued that a partial solution would be for the European Commission to introduce another tier of accounting and disclosure requirements for European companies. That might be a solution to lack of comparability within Europe, but would not solve the problems faced by UK plc because the requirements would apply only to companies in Europe, not to competitors elsewhere.

Also, the UK would almost certainly keep its own accounting standards, which would probably be more demanding than the Europe-wide regime. Fortunately, the Commission last year announced a strategy intended to avoid new legislation as far as possible and work through a more flexible framework, which, it is hoped, will involve the Commission

supporting international accounting standards.

The International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) and the International Organisation of Securities Commissions have agreed that the IASC will develop its standard to meet the needs of those involved in cross-border listings by 1999. This is likely to lead to more widespread use of international accounting standards. Even this will not solve the problems UK plc faces because the standards will apply only to companies with cross-border listings.

Those involved in cross-border listings by 1999. This is likely to lead to more widespread use of international accounting standards. Even this will not solve the problems UK plc faces because the standards will apply only to companies with cross-border listings.

Martin Scicluna is chairman of Deloitte & Touche

most of UK plc's competitors do not have such listings – and many have none.

I share concern that UK companies have to publish information that rivals abroad do not. However, we should encourage other nations to lift their reporting to our level rather than reverse the trend towards clear disclosure that helps to keep London as Europe's leading financial centre. We should also avoid further tilting the playing field against UK companies by increasing their reporting requirements unless really necessary. UK plc should be treated no more harshly than Deutsche Bahn.

The IASC should seek the support of stock exchanges and business around the world for an "International Operating and Financial Review" as a step to more comparable information.

An "International OFR" would build on the success of the UK OFR by offering an attractive option to companies (not only listed ones) that falls short of full compliance with rigid international accounting standards. The statement, voluntary and flexible, would have similar aims to the UK statement, ie, to encourage in companies' annual reports discussion of the business, the factors that underlie it and the structure of its financing.

That is the theory. But it is unlikely to be the practice. What is expected to happen will be quite different. There will be almost nine million taxpayers in this system. Suddenly no human eye is going to look at their figures. So tax inspectors are going to become sceptical, and the result will be the less-than-random audit. One senior tax partner suggested last week that there would probably be around 10,000 "truly" random audits. And about another 40,000 would be targeted either at people the inspectors are doubtful about or at complete sectors, from publicans to plumbers, for example, which they are doubtful about.

Both systems are going to lead to confrontation.

Under the new powers taxpayers will not be told that it is simply a random check. Of those polled in Ernst & Young's survey, 99 per cent thought this was draft. "It is not clear," said Ernst & Young, "why random audit should depend on taxpayer ignorance for its effectiveness. On the contrary, we would argue that if a taxpayer knows this is a spot check, he is far less likely to panic and far more likely to co-operate." The

system also creates a field day for the tabloid press. Penniless pensioners will be found to have expired on the spot with the Revenue notification clutched in their hands.

And those people with a targeted random check will be worse off. Currently the Revenue fails to tell people why they are mounting an investigation. Under the new system they will be able to go ahead and trawl through everything. "In these circumstances," says Ernst & Young, "it is difficult to imagine how an audit will ever be closed. Worse, the temptation to launch fishing expeditions will be almost impossible to resist."

At the moment, criticism of the self-assessment system is wide. The system fails to get the credit it deserves. As the president of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, David Frost, will tell you: "The concept is spot-on." And the assumption is that it will be moved across to cover the corporate tax world in due course as well.

The focus for concern has to be the procedures, which is why the Ernst & Young survey is so timely. The problems are within the Revenue itself. "The Inland Revenue Board and 'the troops' sing a different song," Frost will tell you. The Inland Revenue itself has an impossible job. It has to collect the revenues from the increasingly odd tax policies laid down by the Government. But at the bottom of the pyramid, things are different. Down there inspectors are on commission. Or to be more polite, their pay reflects their success. "It was felt," said the Ernst & Young survey, "that inspectors are becoming increasingly aggressive in their approach, as a result of their profession and pay being directly linked to performance." Once you have told anyone that their future depends on how many convictions they can produce then justice has gone out of the window. That is the biggest fear surrounding the tax system.

On top of this, the powers to demand information have been widened. No longer is it only inspectors, but "any officer of the Board", who can do so. This, with pressures on manpower, means non-technical staff. "Practitioners," said the survey, "believe that junior staff were more likely to push the powers to the limit." Once the system is up and running and becomes much more confrontational, all these errors to the procedures will be much harder to rectify. Now is the time to sort it out.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

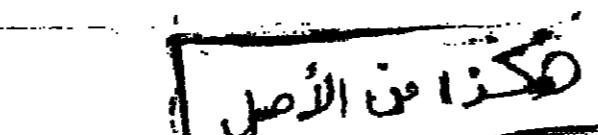
Join the party

WE KNOW that political parties have as much of a problem differentiating themselves from one another as do the big accountancy firms. So it is not surprising to find that the profession's campaign to fight the Government's iniquitous plans to limit to three years the time in which you can claim a VAT refund has gained another supporter.

He is Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party.

It should make for a snappy section in the party's forthcoming manifesto.

Probably very sensible," said a Canadian spokesman. "We would have just boasted him further."



Equities bounce back

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

	High	Low	Company	Price	Yield	% P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES						
556 418 Billed Domes	427.4	3	63 17.2			
125 502 Balfour (HPI)	507	4	33 16.6			
121 503 Balfour (HPI)	507	4	33 16.6			
491 411 Grand Mett	478	5	40 20.2			
423 425 Gammex	424	3	41 14.8			
325 325 McMoran	320	2	35 12.5			
141 93 Merton Wt	119	13	93 15.7			
262 160 S. Breweries	162	1	16 1.6			
BANKS						
37195 27424 ASH (AMRO)	314.1	47	32 12.3			
65 119 Bank of Eng	62.2	1	62 1.1			
205 319 Bank Inst	37	1	18 10.8			
365 365 Banc New	365	1	57 6.8			
544 544 Bankers Trust	544	1	54 10.8			
316 229 Bankers Trust	247.7	1	35 10.4			
552 552 Bankers Trust	552	1	55 10.4			
125 125 Bankers Trust	125	1	12 1.1			
479 479 Bankers Trust	479	1	18 11.2			
317 317 Bankers Trust	317	1	22 2.4			
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■ FILM 1

For the seventh time, *Jane Eyre* comes to the screen — but Zeffirelli misses the point



■ FILM 2

Young love is beautifully depicted by a veteran in Eric Rohmer's *A Summer's Tale*



■ FILM 3

Michael Keaton splits four ways in *Multiplicity* — but the humour doesn't expand to fill



■ FILM 4

When the bullets fly in Prohibition America, Bruce Willis is (naturally) the *Last Man Standing*

Menace lost in thin Eyre

CINEMA: Charlotte Brontë's Gothic masterpiece needs more than pretty pictures to make it work, says Geoff Brown

One star comes from France, the other from America. The director hails from sunny Italy. The material is decidedly English — Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*, receiving at least its seventh cinema transfer. But anyone now can ape the style of filmed English literature and fill the screen with horse-drawn carriages, country houses, rolling hills, bonnets and birdsong.

The latest voyager into this territory is Franco Zeffirelli, famous pretifier of famous plays and operas. He is an absolute master of surface detail, as scene after scene proves. We note the layer of ice in the washing bowl at Lowood, the boarding school where orphaned young Jane (Anna Paquin, the girl from *The Piano*) is sent by her cruel aunt. Courtesy of William Hurt, we gaze into Mr Rochester's hollow eyes, sidewiskers and frown as he subsides into gloom in his dark study, made darker still by the photography of David Watkin.

All well and good. But these things are icing on the cake. We need to bite in and find substance. We need to feel a force pulling us through episodes that can seirio a compendium of clichés from romantic fiction if left to their own devices. But despite decent work by Hurt and Charlotte Gainsbourg (the grown-up heroine who succumbs to his morose charms) the film leaves us high and dry.

The script, prepared by Zeffirelli and Hugh Whitemore, is too neatly filleted, while Zeffirelli appears over-eager to pop in a ready-made image. How many foreboding shots of a carriage approaching a mansion can one movie take? Although the film does nothing silly — like wheel on a specialist to restore Rochester's sight (an invention of the version made in 1921) — this *Jane Eyre* is still lightweight, lacking Gothic anguish.

British dependables beef up the cast: we get Joan Plowright as Rochester's housekeeper, and John Wood as the fearful ruler of Lowood school. Gainsbourg tucks her French accent away, by and large, and

is grave and collected. Hurt, doing more visible acting than usual, capably suggests a Rochester eaten away by repression. But the film plays safe; it's bland and tidy, like painting by numbers.

Jane Eyre
Warner West End
PG, 108 mins
Where's the anguish, Zeffirelli?

A Summer's Tale
Renoir, U, 113 mins
Humane delight from Eric Rohmer

Multiplicity
Odeon Leicester Square
12, 117 mins
A good idea gone bad

Last Man Standing
Warner West End
18, 100 mins
Bruce Willis, of course

Don't Forget You're Going to Die
ICA Cinema, 118 mins
New French director Xavier Beauvois craves our indulgence

Some might also accuse the veteran French director Eric Rohmer of playing safe. The formula is the same: a group of young people, mostly female, differ over decisions, usually in picturesque locations. And talking, always talking, in that philosophical, self-regarding way peculiar to the French. Apart from hoisting a male character above the usual hubub of women, Rohmer's latest, *A Summer's Tale*, never strays from the expected. And why should it? On top form, as he is here, Rohmer can extract more from people and places than almost any other director alive.

The setting is Dinard, on the north coast. Enter Gaspard, a maths student on vacation with a vague plan of meeting up with his girlfriend, Lena. For the moment he forms a platonic friendship with Michael Keaton times four. Keaton, unfortunately, prove no funnier than one.



Charlotte Gainsbourg as the unhappy heroine of Franco Zeffirelli's remake of *Jane Eyre*, a film "bland and tidy, like painting by numbers"

soon become fast friends. In time he meets a greater enchantment, Solène. Then Lena arrives. Which should he choose?

True, this is not the world's most biting question. But while we watch *A Summer's Tale*, shot on location in crisp, sunny splendour, Rohmer makes it appear so. The older he becomes (he is now 76), the greater his sympathy with youth, and the greater his skill in teasing out their thoughts in a natural way. As Gaspard, Melvil Poupaud confronts his dilemma with a pensive look and a head of shaggy curls; he exasperates, but never bores.

But the star attraction is Amanda Langlet, the teenage heroine of *Pauline at the Beach*, who invests Margot with such unforced spark that you long for their bond to prosper. The greatest pleasure, though, is Rohmer's simplicity. No army of technicians march behind him; all he needs to weave his magic are actors, a camera, sound equipment, a film editor, the sun, the sea, and the mysteries of the human heart.

Multiplicity, on the other hand, needs 12 computer animators, four software engineers and a raft of other technical specialists to manufacture its chief attraction: Michael Keaton times four. Four Keatons, unfortunately, prove no funnier than one.

Bruce Willis, of course, is the man referred to in *Last Man Standing*: everyone else is shot full of holes or burnt to a crisp. He doesn't talk much.

but he swigs much whisky, shows off his body, and proves an unnerving shot even when beaten black and blue by the bootlegging gangs who vie for dominance in a dilapidated Texas border town.

The plot hails from Kurosawa's *Yojimbo*, where the hero was a samurai for hire and the squabblers rival merchants of sake and silk.

The material transfers well to Prohibition, but the simple force of Kurosawa's images is quite beyond Walter Hill's

direction. He directs in quotation marks. Nothing is for real; every character and scene comes styled like a pastiche, drawn from the bottomless barrel of American popular culture.

Finally, we reach the year's cheeriest title: *Don't Forget You're Going to Die*. No chance of that in this narcissistic film by the French actor and burgeoning director Xavier Beauvois. Beauvois's character, a graduate art historian, learns that he is HIV-positive.

He reacts by throwing away caution, delving into heroin and cocaine, tasting bliss with a lascivious girl in Italy, and risking death by joining partisans in Split. He wants to die like a 19th-century Romantic, and summons the shade of Byron to prove his lineage.

Beauvois's first feature, *Nord*, was morose enough,

but maintained a sharp critical eye on place and character.

Here he never steps beyond his hero's mind and sullen glare, and wallows in self-pity.

Swinging with Dennis Rowland; plus a trawl through the Camden Crawl

The growl and swagger king

ANYONE who sighed over the voice of Johnny Hartman on the soundtrack of *The Bridges of Madison County* should make haste to see the voice made flesh at Pizza on the Park in Knightsbridge this week. The most potent extrovert to hit London in some time, Dennis Rowland offers proof that the male jazz singer, though an endangered species, is not yet extinct.

Not just a master of the Hartman-Eckstine school of balladry on *You're Blazin'*, the former Basie arist is just as adept at singing the blues à la Joe Williams, mugging his way through *Mack The Knife* in a Satchmo growl or turning on the Lou Rawls R&B swagger on *Wild Women (Don't Have The Blues)*.

If that makes him sound like a Rory Bremner jokebox, rest assured that Rowland has a personality all his own. Turning his back on the traditional image of the ruxedo-clad crooner, he bounded on to the stage in casual, Gap-style waistcoat and worked both the audience and his British musicians like a man possessed.

It might have been too brash and overpowering had he not possessed such acute musical instincts. His reading of *Angel Eyes*, opening slightly off-mike for dramatic effect,

I have heard; *In A Mellotone* floated elegantly above an understated swing pulse supplied by the Liam Noble quartet. Catch him before he leaves, and check your British reference at the door.

Some fine tuning will be needed before Jaegui Dankworth's pop-cabaret group Field of Blue appear at the same venue next month. The

daughter of Cleo Laine, Dankworth is a charismatic performer who shares her mother's enthusiasm for the unconventional.

At the South Bank's Purcell Room she delivered a memorable, stripped-down *God Bless The Child*, pitched

CLIVE DAVIS

against Martin Brunsden's double-bass. But the original songs that make up the bulk of the repertoire lacked distinction: the pacing was uncertain, and it made no sense for Dankworth to step aside to allow her colleagues to take over the vocals again and again.

As far as the actual bands went, very few had obvious links with Camden — although a great many of them looked as though they had nicked their clothes from Jarvis Cocker, who is a former resident. Instead, the geographical ley-lines were stretched from New York to Newcastle and from South Wales to Scotland, ranging from unknown bands to a handful of Top 40 acts.

It was raining, so it was lucky that the venues were either clustered around the Tube station or on the main drags, with only the Falcon

ANN SCANLON

■ DESPITE THE DEMISE OF BRITPOP, CAMDEN TOWN IS STILL THE MOST FASHIONABLE SQUARE MILE IN EUROPE. ITS HIGH CONCENTRATION OF PUBS, CLUBS AND LIVE VENUES MEANS THAT THERE IS ALWAYS ANOTHER PLACE TO GO, ANOTHER POP STAR TO RUN INTO. IT WAS THEREFORE AN OBVIOUS PLACE FOR THE CAMDEN CRAWL TO BE BORN.

Starting last year, the idea is to give people the opportunity to watch as many new bands as possible, in a festival-like atmosphere, at a very reasonable price. Participants swapped their £10 tickets for a wristband, which gave them access to more than 30 bands at seven different venues, and they were also given a 2-track CD featuring most of the acts, plus a guide map and a copy of the running order to help them to plan their course.

It was raining, so it was lucky that the venues were either clustered around the Tube station or on the main drags, with only the Falcon

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■ THEATRE 1

The Whitehall farce returns — in all its logic-stretching glory — with *Cash on Delivery*



■ THEATRE 2

... while Leeds enjoys a revival of *Office Suite*, a pair of Alan Bennett's most prescient plays

THE TIMES ARTS



■ MUSIC

Can a Russian-born violinist lead the Ulster Orchestra to new heights in its anniversary year?



■ RADIO

Reminiscences of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Zelda in the writer's centenary year

RADIO

Greedy and not so great

THEATRE: A second-generation Cooney farce in London; a revival of Alan Bennett's prophetic double bill in Leeds

Whoops, there goes the plot again

One of those scientists who are busily unravelling the secrets of DNA should get bits of Cooney into the lab without delay. There might be a Nobel Prize for whoever identifies the gene that father Ray, author of *Chase Me, Comrade* and a dozen other farces, has passed on to son Michael, author of *Cash on Delivery*. The main characteristic of this snippet of double helix is clear enough. It consists of a compulsion to thrust cartoon people into situations that force them to tell so many fibs, adopt so many guises, that harmless critics like me are left begging for something simple, like a five-hour play in German by Botho Strauss.

Is this the sort of gene that scientists should eradicate while the sufferer is in the womb? When the protagonist of *Cash on Delivery* decided he had developed Tourette's syndrome and started feverishly groping an ageing lady of vast bulk and ferocious mien, I did wonder. But there was another, more forgiving side of me that often shook with something that, rather to my surprise, I had to admit was laughter.

Farc had, after all, returned to the Whitehall, where Ray Cooney performed beside the great Brian Rix in *Dry Rot*, *Simple Spymen* and his own *One for the Pot*. Husbands hid in cupboards, Trouser fell. Nostalgic freaks will not find those things in *Cash*, but they will get a supposed corpse running around while still attached to his stretcher, men in drag, and an exploding washing machine.

And what of the plot? Yes, I was afraid, you might ask. All the confusions derive from the attempts

of Bradley Walsh's Eric, who has lost his job with the electricity company, to perpetuate massive social security frauds. When Frank Thornton's wintry inspector comes to ask questions about one of the invalids, unemployed men, widows and fatherless children with whom he has supposedly packed his house, he and an unwilling lodger soon find themselves dementedly covering up endless cover-ups. Indeed, Nick Wilton's Norman is variously cast as a lumberjack with lassa fever who has died falling from a tree, his deaf son, and the local landlady.

There is some logic to events that soon involve an undertaker, a doctor specializing in transvestism, and God knows who else; but it is well over the boundary between the just-plausible and the preposterous. If the DSS is as gullible and generous as this, Peter Lilley should promptly be fired, for income tax must be 20 per cent higher than it should be. As it is, you get the feeling that if a character entered disguised as a stork, the social service sleuths on hand would promptly smother it with maternity benefits.

Still, still, I could have done without all those jokes about little Willy and Uranus; but I enjoyed the moment when Brian Murphy's elderly fraudster gets biffed by a door, flutters about like a goofy marionette, and passes out. I laughed when the others tried to revive him by making him sniff the contents of a black plastic bag, and John Hart Dyke's creepy mortician concludes they are getting rid of a corpse on the cheap. The Whitehall is back — way, way back — in business.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



It's a classic: Justin Shevlin and Tracie Bennett in *Cash on Delivery*, plus corpses, men in drag and an exploding washing machine

Successful audit of a prophet on paper

IF ALAN Bennett had lived in the Middle Ages, he would have died at the stake, condemned for selling his soul in exchange for the gift of reading the future. When *Enjoy* was revived last year, the conservation of a slum house as part of the national heritage (the play's climax) was no longer the quirky fantasy it must have seemed a decade and a half earlier.

Again and again he has sensed what will surely happen if things go on as they are, together with the insight to determine which things are ominous. Like the headmas-

ter in his first play, *Forty Years On*, when he hears the word fart, he knows which way the wind is blowing.

When the two television plays that make up the double bill of *Office Suite* were transmitted in 1978, computers had not yet obliterated work practices that had survived for centuries. Quills had been replaced by fountain pens and then by typewriters, but the filing and issuing of

Office Suite
West Yorkshire
Playhouse, Leeds

documents was much as it had been when clerks of the Inquisition docketed intake of witches against purchase of stakes. In *Green Forms*, Bennett catches the moment when the computerised future arrives, and in *A Visit from Miss Prothero* it has kicked the present into the past.

At their desks in an ill-kept office, Paula Dionisotti and Susan Wooldridge, playing Doris and Doreen, gossip,

jargon that all workforces create. "What's Wolverhampton doing here?" Doris asks, looking into a buff folder. "It's because of Solihull," comes the reply. We learn no more about the wandering Wolverhampton but recognise a verbal short-cut, a convenience to those who use it, comedy to those who overhear.

An apparently misdirected form (green) that comes their way starts them questioning

their future, which turns out to be terminally endangered. Dionisotti, the fierce one, unwisely confident of her value, and Wooldridge's timorous assistant shade in altogether credible details of office behaviour, and Jennie Darnell's direction guides the mood from comedy to alarm. William Hargreaves's clever design surrounds the office with a rubbish-heap of filing cabinets.

JEREMY KINGSTON

MUSIC: The Ulster Orchestra is 30 years old on Saturday. Hilary Finch meets its new conductor

Belfast is never more artistically buoyant than when its social and political future is in precarious balance. And that, after all, is most of the time. "It is too late," Louis MacNeice commented all of 60 years ago, "to save your soul with bunting." But there will be more than bunting on display in Belfast this autumn. A confident new season, with two new productions, is under way at Opera Northern Ireland: a new 2,750-seater concert hall is rising from the Waterfront, planned to open in January; and the Ulster Orchestra celebrates its thirtieth anniversary at the end of this week with the appointment of a new principal conductor, Dmitri Sitkovetsky.

The orchestra, founded on September 28, 1966, had only three years of peaceful gestation before the Troubles began again. Yet in three decades of roadblocks being raised and lowered, peace being tested and span out again, the orchestra has built a formidable reputation for the perfor-

mance and recording of British music, under the direction of Bryden Thomson and Vernon Handley.

It has toured its own province diligently and Europe and America extensively; and it has recently developed a flair for brighter Gallic colours under the direction of Yan Pascal Tortelier. The band has grown from 37 to 63 players: just the right size for shading into the darker, richer Russian palette by a violinist for whom chamber-music making remains a priority.

Moscow forged Sitkovetsky the soloist; the Juilliard School in America, to which he emigrated in 1977, made a chamber musician of him: Seattle and Finland developed him into a festival director, pro-

grammer and canny personnel manager. With his own "dream team" of string players in the New European Chamber Orchestra, the baton was all that remained for him to pick up. "Being a conductor is the ultimate musical experience, because you get to play — in your mind, and sometimes physically too — all the parts, and you get even further under the composer's skin."

Sitkovetsky first met the Ulster Orchestra as soloist in the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in 1988; he then conducted the composer's Serenade for Strings at three days' notice. "I was immediately aware of the closeness and alertness of their ensemble. They function like a large chamber orchestra, with

everyone fully engaged and no sense at all of the merely routine. I felt a wonderful sense of rapport.

"It doesn't matter where they come from; when the players arrive in Belfast, something happens. There's a sense of openness, of passionate spirit, even of mischief. The element of humour is absolutely essential, after all, in a situation which is so strange, so complicated. There is something of the Russian character there."

Not least in the forthcoming programming. The season starts as it means to go on, with Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Shostakovich — and later with Rodion Shchedrin one of the most successful composers of the Soviet era.

● The Ulster Orchestra's season opens tonight at the Guildhall, Derry (8pm) and tomorrow at the Ulster Hall, Belfast (7.45pm)



So I guess it is no surprise that Fitzgerald emerges from the letters as a man obsessed with money, a fault easily detected by those who do not suffer a lack of it. Even so, he had an extraordinary appetite for discussing cash, and even when writing about the books he appears to have been more interested in presentation than content. No wonder that he eventually went to Hollywood.

Elsewhere this week, Radio 3 has sent me on a marathon and my performance so far is abysmal: I am exhausted at the end of lap one. I know that Simon Rattle is a very Great Conductor who has turned the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra into a world-class outfit. But should he not be deposed to qualify for 16 hours of radio?

Simon Rattle — Home and Away is running for two hours every Saturday lunchtime for the next eight weeks. The series is about his various orchestral collaborations, just in case we thought he was born on the podium in Birmingham. Part one included Rattle, aged 18, conducting Stravinsky with the Glasgow Youth Orchestra, and very impressive it was.

The BBC is fond of themed programming but there is certainly no requirement to hear the whole of this series to get pleasure from it. Which, in my case, is probably just as well.

PETER BARNARD

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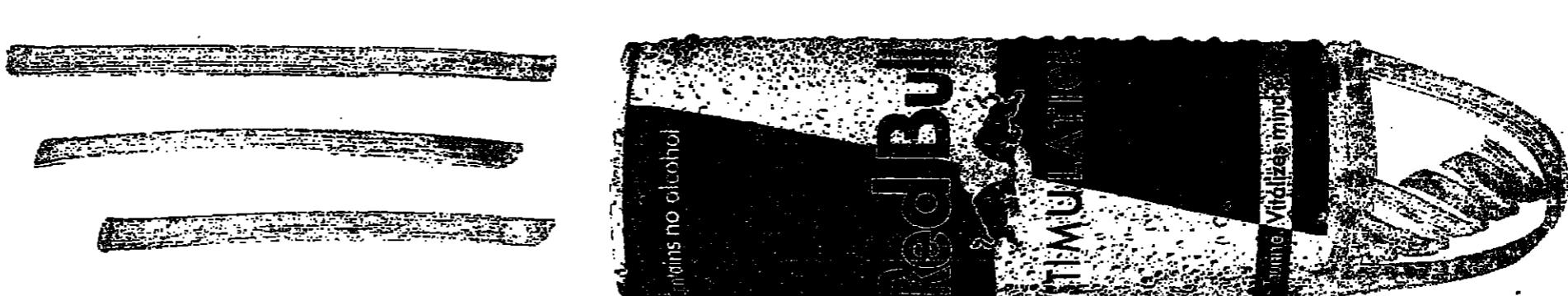


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CAUTION: DO NOT DRINK WHEN YOU WANT TO SLEEP

THE TIMES THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26 1996

The years between 1830 and 1860 are some of the most remarkable in American literature. It was the time of the (belated) American Romantic revolution, sometimes called the American Renaissance, really a renaissance.

The leading figure was Ralph Waldo Emerson, son of Boston minister, who himself became a Unitarian clergyman until a crisis of faith took him into other, more self-reliant offices. The chief seat was the small town of Concord, two and a half hours from Boston (until they built the Boston-Fitchburg railroad) which Henry James later called the American Weimar.

Emerson came from Concord and, after his second marriage to Lidian (his first wife had died aged 19), Emerson resided there, in a house called Coolidge Castle. In a new age when old fates were waning, America growing more confident of its historical novelty, Emerson announced a philosophy of romantic self-reliance: "God is, not was". Pines became a philosopher, poet, critic. Emerson, all those things, lived largely by lecturing. A man who knew the need to be "alone with the Alone" he still gathered round him a community of powerful, like-minded,

Malcolm Bradbury
EMERSON AMONG THE ECCENTRICS
A Group Portrait
By Carlos Baker
Viking, £25
ISBN 0 670 86675 X

individual friends. Many moved to Concord to be near him. They forged what became a dominant sensibility of America: writing for thirty years; the movement known, to Emerson's own unease, as Transcendentalism.

So crucial is this coming together and flowing of representative men and women for American cultural history that its story has been repeatedly told. Nearly every hand held a pen, and kept a voluminous record. The Transcendentalist heyday came round mid-century, in a flourish of major books: the impact radiated to

subsequent generations. Walt Whitman in one way, Henry James in another, advanced the enterprise. Today Transcendentalism is still planted firm in American writing, in ways not true of the British Romantics.

Carlos Baker's magnificent study of the work of his lifetime was all but completed when he died in 1987. Unlike most recent stories, it's no abstract analysis of Emersonianism as quasi-religion, philosophy, contribution to abolitionism, environmentalism, feminism, optimism. It's an intimate, exact, near-daily reconstruction of the human detail of a way of life, a community of friends and adversaries, a culture that made culture – studied stage by stage, friendship by friendship, marriage by marriage, quarrel by quarrel.

Emerson's company was "eccentric", grainily individualistic, driven by spirit in the world of nature and material fact. There was Bronson Alcott, former peddler, educator, Orphic sayer, whose impoverished wife tended Irish immigrants in Boston while he thought. There was the emotionally impulsive Margaret Fuller, who tried to tempt Emerson into the heaving bosom of nature, clearly her own. Ellery Channing married Fuller's sister and joined the group. Henry David Thoreau sat in his hut at Walden Pond, on Emerson's land.

Emerson's poetical clarity, his fascination both with spirit and human foible, his bridging of the powers of divinity and the world of fact and nature, the bounce of his prose, the force of his reflections, held them together. So did his generosity: in editing, promoting, financing the surrounding band, advancing the idea of the new American poet, who spoke in Orphic voice, asserting: "I unsettle all things. No facts are to me sacred, none are profane. I simply experiment, an endless seeker, with no past at my back."

Others of different cast joined the proceedings, above all Nathaniel Hawthorne, who rented the old Emerson house, the Old Manse. Hawthorne admired Emerson but not all the "eccentrics". "Never was a poor little country village infested with such a variety of queer, strangely dressed, oddly behaved mortals, most of whom took it upon themselves to be important agents of the world's destiny, yet were simply bores of a very intense water." It was Hawthorne and his friend Melville who invested the culture of the era with the sense of irony and tragedy that deepened in literature.

Not that tragedy was absent from a culture that for all its experimentation now feels a wonderfully bucolic age. Emerson lost several brothers and a beloved son; Hawthorne a sister in a steamboat accident. But two tragedies were overwhelming.

One was the death of Margaret Fuller, shipwrecked while returning from revolutionary Italy with her new husband and the child she had longed to conceive. Emerson edited a work in her homage. The other tragedy was more public. Most Transcendentalists were passionate abolitionists, supporters of John Brown, who attempted to start an insurrection in the South. The Civil War that followed his hanging turned Emerson warlike. Many near him died in the conflict and, when the horrors were over, America and Transcendentalism were not what they'd been.

It was not new moral law but economic growth that held postwar America together. Most of the writers had gone. Emerson, memory failing sadly, lived on till 79. Beautifully constructed and written Baker's book is the largest and best endeavour to bring this whole crucial world back into full felt life.

Playing a dangerous game

Conor Cruise O'Brien
O'Brien on the life of a pivotal architect in the making of modern Ireland

James Mackay is a Scottish Presbyterian who has fallen under the spell of the Irish Catholic and nationalist hero, Michael Collins. His book is well researched and his narrative well told. The material – mostly the Irish troubles of 1919-1922 – is very interesting. So, many readers will probably find the book enjoyable. Unfortunately, as a work of history, it is deeply flawed.

In his introduction Mr Mackay writes of his hero: "Had Michael lived, it is highly probable that he would have brought the civil war to a speedy conclusion and might even have nipped partition in the bud and spared the generations unborn from the suffering and anguish of more recent times."

And in his epilogue Mr Mackay writes: "Had Michael lived, it is highly probable that he would have brought the civil war to a speedy conclusion and succeeded in healing the break with the North, leading to the removal of partition."

All this stuff about Collins being on the way to ending partition is sheer nonsense, as is indeed apparent from Mr Mackay's own narrative. After the setting up of the Irish Free State – now the Republic of Ireland – at the end of 1920, Collins set himself to conduct a secret war against Northern Ireland, already established as part of the United Kingdom. As Mr Mackay writes: "It was to counter the alarming growth in what has now come to be termed 'ethnic cleansing' that Michael was compelled to arm and equip the Northern IRA when he was taking steps to combat the IRA in the South and West of Ireland."

Actually, Collins's backing for the IRA in the North was part of an effort to heal the yawning split of the IRA in the South, over the Treaty. Mackay goes on: "Even more extraordinary was (sic) Michael's arrangements to send



A charismatic figure: Michael Collins (left) with Richard Mulcahy, Diarmuid O'Hegarty and Kevin O'Higgins at Arthur Griffith's funeral (1922)

weapons and ammunition to the Northern IRA from the material supplied to him by the British for combating southern republicans. This was indeed an exceedingly dangerous game."

It was indeed, but it was one Collins pursued until his death in August 1922. After his death the policy of arming the Northern IRA was dropped by his successor, William T. Cosgrave.

Michael Collins was a guerrilla leader of geniuses, and in many ways an attractive human being. But his culture and his politics were exclusively those of Catholic Ireland and he never made any effort to understand the politics of Irish Protestants. At the end

of his idea was to head off the burgeoning civil war in the South and turn it into a war for the liberation of Northern Ireland. As far as the Government in the South was concerned, the struggle would have to be conducted secretly, and the secret was never well kept. Something similar was attempted much later, by members of a Fianna Fail Government in 1970, but had to be dropped when it leaked to the public. And traces of similar thinking can be discerned within the present "peace process" in a continuing cosy relationship between Sinn Féin – even while the IRA is again "at war" – and civil servants of the Department of External Affairs.

Such perspectives are almost entirely lacking from Mr Mackay's book, which is in consequence a bad guide to Irish history and politics. There are occasional glimpses of reality: "In June, an inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary was shot in the main street of Thurles, Co Tipperary. As the unfortunate victim lay dying a crowd gathered and jeered, with cries of 'Up the Republic'. No sympathy was shown for the

dead man or his family, the town council remained silent on the matter, and scarcely a blade was drawn on the day of the funeral."

Not a spontaneous pattern. Mr Mackay is describing, although he doesn't seem to realise it, the marks of an IRA reign of terror in the area at the time. The RIC was generally liked and respected and some manifestations (even if ambivalent) of respect for the dead would have been expected, if the inhabitants had not been mortally afraid of the people who were supposed to be liberating them. And that pattern hasn't completely gone away either.

As I said, Mr Mackay generally writes well. But

there are occasions when the excess of his sympathy for suffering republicans leads him into bathos. Thus, of the British position in Ireland in the summer of 1920, Mr Mackay writes: "Thereafter a doom-laden atmosphere not unlike that within the Hitler bunker of 1945 increasingly prevailed." And again: "In the annals of man's inhumanity to man, the savagery of the Inquisition and the Gestapo must rank high, but that night both were surpassed by the sadism of Captain Hardy and his associates of F Division of the Auxiliary Police."

Michael Collins: A Life makes an interesting read, but should not be taken seriously as a guide to Irish history.

Did any one of them die a happy man?

Bruce Anderson

MUDLING THROUGH Power, Politics and the Quality of Government in Postwar Britain By Peter Hennessy *Gollancz, £20* ISBN 0 575 06366 1

Attlee that "the Navy survived Winston and Brendan Bracken, it will probably survive you". During the February 1974 election, Enoch Powell tried to co-ordinate his attacks on the Heath Government with Harold Wilson's, and to ensure that they did not both make big speeches on the same night. His intermediary in this was his then chief assistant, Andrew Alexander, now of the *Daily Mail* – as Joe Haines recalled on one of Mr Hennessy's programmes: "There was one hilarious occasion when he emerged from the shadows of a hotel in Cardiff to beckon me." They were a well-matched pair.

But there is some sloppy editing. A number of quotations are re-used in different sections; the material is thin enough already without having to reread it. There are also some misjudgments and mis-



Red meat and not getting scuppered: Hopkins, Bracken and Winston Churchill (1951)

Macmillan did not sparkle on his feet in the Commons, as Mr Hennessy claims. In those days, he was still known as the dinner bell; when he got to his feet, the chamber emptied. Lloyd George may have given him good advice as to how to make a speech; he did not succeed in putting it into practice until the Attlee years, when he rapidly transformed his reputation.

Peter Hennessy congratulates

Macmillan for a brave attempt to end white minority rule in Rhodesia after Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence. What attempt? What bravery? Wilson did make a speech saying that the Smith regime would fall in weeks rather than months. But this was a typically Wilsonian performance; it sounded imposing, but had no basis in reality. Within three years, during the *Fearless* talks, Mr

sions as generous as anything that Mr Smith and his colleagues could have hoped for. Fortunately for Harold Wilson, Ian Smith and the Rhodesian Front were too bone-headed to accept them; one of the many interesting "what ifs" of recent years is what would have happened had they done so.

Mr Hennessy does criticise Mr Wilson for not doing enough to make "planning"

Ian Mikardo, whom he describes as a "socialist and management consultant". Fellow-traveller and Stalinist would have been more accurate. He would have favoured any plan, as long as it lasted for five years and involved Gulags. While it is natural that Mr Mikardo should be out of sympathy with Wilsonian rhetorical emptiness, Mr Hennessy should not have given him credence.

Our author also wonders whether any postwar Prime Minister except Home died a happy man. Surely Attlee and Macmillan died as happily as is possible – though one could forgive Mr Hennessy a lot for his generous treatment of Lord Home, except that he is equally generous to Ted Heath.

This book has a subplot to defend the BBC, which Mr Hennessy describes as a "barbarian of reason and balance ... part of [the] high cultural fabric". There may still be a few aspects of the BBC which justify that description: Peter Hennessy's broadcasts are not among them. They are amateurish, demanding at most half an ear, and to describe them, as he does, as part of a "shared ... capacity for thinking together" is absurdly pretentious. So was the decision to perpetuate these

Lyricism lies in life

Russell Celyn Jones

ADMIRING SILENCE
By Abdulrazak Gurnah
Hamish Hamilton, £16
ISBN 0 241 00184 6

ally, England's also had its all shagged out.

The Africa he describes is reminiscent of V.S. Naipaul's milieu in *Bend in the River*: claustrophobic and more humane than organised. But at least it's a country where one can have an audience with the Prime Minister simply by knocking on his door.

Zanzibar is where the lying finally stops and we discover the real identities of the cast – and that the narrator's own absent father's trajectory is almost identical to his own. The Prime Minister makes an offer to him to stay and help to restore the kingdom.

His experiences in England as a schoolteacher have made him sought after, but the narrator returns because England is Emma. He probably wishes he had not in the end, but that's another story.

THERE are a few false moments in the novel: his characters all tend to conduct long monologues with the same syntax, voicing the same concerns; the narrative quest for identity never quite finds its way back to the opening crisis of ill-health, and the personal and political themes of duplicity are not as osmotic as they could be. But Gurnah is a compelling storyteller and *Admiring Silence* exercises a mnemonic hold on the reader. It raises the hue and cry through passages of sustained lyricism, evoking with great passion a pointless epic of a human life.

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Stephen Womack reports on how other parts of the globe are keen to conduct business the CII way



Chartered Insurance Institute qualifications are in strong demand in Hong Kong and other former parts of the British Empire. Elsewhere, an Anglo-Saxon business culture is desirable

Worldwide demand for standards

Last week David Bland, director-general of the Chartered Insurance Institute, was in Moscow. Next week he goes to Poland. No, he is not on a tour of Eastern Europe, but his jet-setting is a reflection of the CII's growing presence internationally.

Historically, the CII's international activity was closely linked to that of UK insurers. The institute followed the companies, which in turn followed the British Empire. This explains the strong CII outposts in places such as Australia, Hong Kong and South Africa.

The world has now changed, and hence the presence of Dr Bland in Moscow. Together with the CII's international division director, Diana Morrissey, he was formalising plans to open a CII exam centre in Moscow as a joint venture with the city's Finance Academy. In Poland, Dr Bland will award certificates to the first students to qualify in a local exam that the CII has developed with Polish insurance organisations.

Why are people in these nations bothered about CII qualifications? Ms Morrissey says: "In the developed nations it is because they feel that the CII can give them worldwide recogni-

tion for the work that they have done, either by accrediting their local exams or by sitting the institute exams directly. In developing economies, which have infant insurance markets and little local training, it seems that CII is the one choice."

While the CII will allow overseas students to take in British exams, elements of these are often meaningless in that student's home market. Hence the CII looks to forge joint

ventures with local insurance bodies, either vetting and endorsing local exams, or tailoring its own exams to local conditions.

UK insurers are increasingly aware of the international battle for favour. The Chartered Insurance Institute, together with Sun Alliance, has just launched a joint education programme in China. It is no coincidence that Sun Alliance, now part of Royal & Sun Alliance, would

clearly love to be granted a licence to trade in China. Other UK firms are looking to do similar things.

It is not just companies that are keen to sponsor training in developing markets. Governments are too. Together with partners from France and Germany, the CII is running an educational initiative in Vietnam.

Eight UK insurance professionals are lecturing on insurance issues under the banner of the Vietnamese

Ministry of Finance. Advances in technology should help the CII to develop its international links further still. The Internet will allow it to deliver course material and training packages to distant nations more cost effectively.

Exploratory contacts are already under way with insurance organisations in Colombia and Argentina. Soon, no corner of the globe will be without the CII's guidance.

BRADFORD-BORN

Mark Pollard has spent the last ten years working in insurance in Italy. For the past three he has been part of a blossoming joint venture between the CII and Italian insurance organisation IFA. The venture lets Italian nationals study for CII qualifications, which have been tailored for their own market and part translated.

Mr Pollard, a Fellow of the Institute, explains that some parts of the CII's associateship exam are unsuitable for insurance professionals in Italy. "Papers on UK insurance law are of little use to someone here, where the law derives from the Napoleonic code." Yet other professional skills cross borders without difficulty. "Property insurance is a good example," he says. "If a building burns down, it does not matter what language it burns in."

INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

There are currently nearly 70 students taking the course, with the first person close to achieving the associate grade.

CII qualifications are no pushover and require plenty of hard study. Why do Italian students bother? Mr Pollard says business in Italy is becoming increasingly professional and the job market more competitive. The exams are seen as a way of acquiring an Anglo-Saxon business culture, which has something of a cachet here."

Philip Pettersen admits to having "found" the institute's qualifications relatively late in life. He only started studying for exams in 1987, but has raced through them and has now qualified as a fellow, the highest grade. Mr Pettersen runs

Forbes Re, a Johannesburg-based reinsurance brokerage. Reinsurance, the process where insurers insure themselves, is a global business. Mr Pettersen finds that the letters FCII — Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute — on his business card are recognised the world over.

South Africa has its own insurance institute. Its exams are recognised by the CII in London, putting South African insurance professionals well on the road to the passport of CII qualifications.

Although a late starter, Mr Pettersen says that the CII's associateship qualification is now the minimum he looks for when recruiting staff. He says it is a guarantee of quality. He also feels that widely-recognised qualifications "will go some way to restoring the image of insurance as a quality profession."

What professionalism means to the clients

THE importance of the chartered status and the perception of professionalism it brings are emphasised in the findings of independent research carried out on behalf of the Chartered Insurance Institute.

A survey, among 101 senior business professionals across a broad section of industries showed that six out of ten felt a greater sense of confidence dealing with chartered individuals and that 67 per cent believed companies that employed chartered people were more reputable.

Fewer than half those questioned were aware of chartered status within the insurance industry, but 62 per cent believed the industry would be enhanced by chartered status.

The respondents thought that professionalism brought with it competence, experience, commitment, skills and standards, and seven out of ten believed that examinations made employees more professional. Medicine (76 per cent), law (54 per cent) and accountancy (53 per cent) were felt to be the sectors most associated with the term "professional".

The research found that work-related examinations are considered key to an employee's career structure by

nine out of ten respondents — only 3 per cent claiming that examinations make no difference to employee's career.

Two thirds believed that to encourage employees to take examinations, companies could pay exam fees and give time off to study. The underlying feeling, however, was that support should be given only if there was a perceived benefit to the company.

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The researchers also conducted interviews with ten insurance professionals which showed that there was a strong shift towards the taking of the exam leading to associateship level of the CII as a prerequisite before even applying for a position. For the most part, ACII exams were considered at least very desirable and at most a necessity.

CHRISTOPHER WARMAN

The London International Insurance and Reinsurance Market Association (LIRMA) congratulates the Chartered Insurance Institute on the commencement of its Centenary year.

We look forward to continuing the development of our partnership in education and training, seeking to raise the standards of professional qualifications in the insurance and reinsurance industry in London and around the world.

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Chris Wheal on how insurance qualifications may soon rival accountants' and lawyers' exams



Simon Henderson is typical of the CII's new blood

Laying a claim to fame

Bryan Kellett, next year's CII president, has one of those Toblerone-shaped blocks of wood on his desk but, instead of having his name etched on it, the words embossed in gold read: "No accountants."

Turn it round and get: "No solicitors." Joking aside, Mr Kellett admits that his aim is for the public to rank insurance professionals alongside solicitors and accountants. The institute is well on the way.

Mr Kellett and the CII's current president, Philip Rhodes, can both be described as self-made men. Both left school and, apart from their national service, started as gofers and ended up as captains of their industry. Both chose to take the CII exams, in part at least, to demonstrate their knowledge through qualification. The new recruits to insurance have very different reasons for choosing the CII. They are already graduates and are seeking professional status and a career boost through the CII exams.

Simon Henderson is typical of the CII's new blood. He is assistant director at Sedgwick Risk Benefits and, at 28, is already a Chartered

Insurance Practitioner. "A lot of the jobs you see now want the ACII qualification. Even Lloyd's is taking on the ACII as important. If you look around, a lot of the newer people are interested in it. It's the graduates who realise that qualifications are important. It's a way of fast-tracking."

Mr Kellett also has Institute of Risk Management qualifications. He left City University in 1989 after studying economics and thought his maths and statistics background would be useful in underwriting insurance.

"A lot of my friends did accountancy and I didn't want to do that," he says. "I didn't grow up wanting to work in insurance but I could see a good career developing."

He started in financial services, joining Sedgwick's graduate recruitment scheme and beginning with the CII's Financial Planning Certificate. "The easiest way to understand what everybody was talking about was to study," he adds. He then went on to start the Advanced FPC but switched to the wholesale broking business and used his AFPC exams as credits towards his ACII qualification. And it is not going to stop there. He says he is going to

become a Fellow of the CII, and he will not be alone. His wife Janet is also ACII qualified though she is a Chartered Insurer.

Fiona Tredray, 27, is different. She is a business development consultant with Norwich Union, working in personal lines of insurance and managing the accounts of all the agents in her area. She works from the company's Croydon office but covers Guildford and is rarely in the office. Instead working from home and her car phone. She took a degree in history at Exeter University, graduating in



Fiona Tredray: consultant

1990. Her father is an insurance broker so she had a good idea about the industry and liked the business, too.

"I knew you had a wide range of careers in insurance. I wanted to work for a big company and I wanted to get into the old inspector's role," she says. She applied to several companies and had a few offers to choose from.

Norwich Union put her through a trainee inspector programme. It also insisted on her taking the ACII exams. She is well aware that the CII exams are highly regarded within the industry, with certificates on the office walls wherever she goes. But there is still a problem with public perception. "The ACII is widely recognised within the industry and that's what we are trying to bring to the public," she says.

Mr Henderson believes there is still some way to go. "It's recognised within the industry but if I go up to someone in the street and say I've got an ACII they say that's nice. What colour is it?"

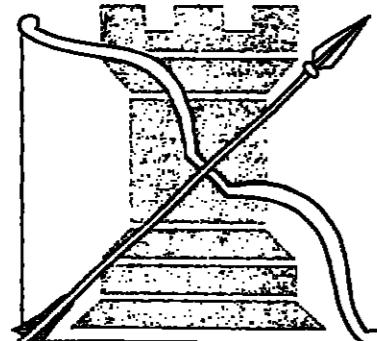
Mr Kellett is determined to use the CII centenary year to win that public relations battle. Then maybe his wooden block can have "No insurers" written on it.

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From a talking shop to a profession

As the Chartered Insurance Institute enters its centenary year, it seems that some things never change. Professionalism in the insurance industry has never been a more crucial issue.

But the fledgeling organisation formed in 1896, then dubbed the Federation of Insurance Institutes of Great Britain, was more a talking shop for the fire insurance business. A century later, the CII has 70,000 members and affiliations with more than 50 institutes worldwide.

Today its members face very different professional challenges. Technology and cut-throat 1990s competition have radically altered the insurance business. Companies like Direct Line, with slick call centres and clever marketing have made general insurance products such as motor and buildings insurance commodity products sold on price.

This first attack launched in the early 1990s has been followed by telephone sales of life insurance products such as term assurance. Telephone-based direct sellers, such as Virgin Direct are also making inroads into more complex products such as pensions.

The image of the insurance industry has also been battered by infighting over membership eligibility and threats by the London institute to quit delayed the granting of a Royal charter, and the formation of the CII, to 1912.

Similar concerns were raised back in 1916 by former CII president H.E. Wilson.

Wilson summed up the industry's image by quoting a

photographer looking for a job for his son: "He hasn't enough brains for a photographer, but we thought he might do for an insurance office."

Despite slow beginnings, the CII has managed to maintain a central role, widening membership and taking over competing organisations.

After the Second World War, a substantial part of the CII's work was tidying up exams for association and fellowship status which each involved nearly 100 courses.

The institute has continuously raised industry standards, says Grant Ringshaw

But the CII's history has not been without its problems. In the mid 1960s membership fell heavily as new computer systems resulted in mass redundancies.

A revival began in 1984 with an influx of members from the Lloyd's market after the CII finally decided to reintroduce marine studies into the Associateship exam. The Society of Fellows was formed in 1986 after concerns that fully qualified members should keep their knowledge up-to-date through research.

So is the CII an academic and elitist organisation? Such charges are vigorously denied. As clerical staff numbers rose, the CII attempted to meet their needs by launching the Certificate of Proficiency in 1987 in partnership with Lloyd's and other bodies.

Subsidaries have been created to cope with CII's sprawling and diverse membership

needs. The Society of Technicians in Insurance is aimed at junior management, while the Society of Financial Advisers (Sofa), set up in 1991 concentrates on financial services.

But the biggest strain on professional standards in life insurance have emerged in the past ten years following the 1986 Financial Services Act. Financial advisers must meet new Personal Investment Authority competence requirements by July 1997.

Just two months ago, Sofa and the CII announced plans to allow financial advisers to call themselves chartered financial planners — a major step that would put financial advisers on a par with other professions.

New markets have also created new demands — this year CII teamed up with Bupa to develop the first exam for the growing Private Medical Insurance sector.

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WORD WATCHING

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bird
B. Prodigy
an Andalusian
c. Intuition

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a. Intuition
b. The sense of smell
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GOLF

Montgomerie and Lehman aim to reap late harvest

FROM JOHN HOPKINS IN DUBLIN

AUTUMN is a bountiful season and Tom Lehman and Colin Montgomerie are just two golfers who are using the months of September and October to reap a harvest from their good golf earlier in the year. This time last year, Lehman made his first appearance in the Smurfit European Open after being one of the strong men in the defeated United States Ryder Cup team the previous week. Wide-eyed and corduroy-trousered, and accompanied by his father, he cut a warm and sympathetic figure around the K Club, 18 miles southwest of Dublin.

Now he is back at the K Club again. This time, though, he is the reigning Open champion, with the distinction of being one of the few men to have received two £200,000 cheques from the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, organisers of the Open. It happened like this.

"My cheque for winning the Open was delivered to a street four blocks away from where I live," Lehman said. "Somebody thought it was his lucky day, it was returned and I think it sat in the post office for a while."

Lehman, meanwhile, had realised the cheque had not



Lehman: busy summer

Hamburg offers hope for Europe quartet

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

FOUR of Europe's leading women golfers are attempting to shake off the depression of defeat in the Solheim Cup by winning the German Open, which begins in Hamburg today.

Marie-Laure de Lorenzi, from France, Dale Reid, of Scotland, and the English pair, Lisa Hackney and Joanne Morley, were in the Europe side heavily beaten by the United States at St Pierre, Chepstow, last weekend.

Reid, who broke par in three of the four rounds in Germany last year, has recaptured the form that has earned her 21

Tour victories. "My putting has improved since Mickey Walker [the Europe captain] gave me a lesson three weeks ago," Reid, who finished fifth in the European Open and sixth in the English Open two weeks ago, said.

Rachel Hetherington, of Australia, defends the title — her first on the women's Tour — that she won last year, say

but the event in South Africa and the matchplay.

Then there were letters, more than 1,000 of them, some from overseas. "They said nice things, like what a popular champion I was, and that made me feel good. To have European fans say those things was nice."

Montgomerie is in the middle of a marathon run of events as he attempts to capture the Order of Merit for the fourth successive year and cashes in on some of the lucrative tournaments that are staged in the last months of the golfing year. He may have started the year slowly, as he waited at home for the birth of his second child, but he is more than making up for it now. This is his fifth event in as many weeks and he will compete in five more before he has a week off.

Montgomerie is so consistent that, year in year out, he has been the man to beat in Europe. This time last year, he was locked in a titanic struggle with Sam Torrance and, having started the week £30,000 behind Torrance, he raced past the Scot to lead by £30,000 after finishing third here behind Bernhard Langer and Barry Lane.

For Torrance in 1995, read Ian Woosnam in 1996. The difference is that Montgomerie is £141,547.42 ahead of Woosnam and the title should be his, even though he is competing in fewer events this year than last. Ian is obviously good enough to win," Montgomerie said, "but, if I play my usual consistent golf, I should be OK. Realistically speaking, the title should be mine."

Even for someone as rich as Montgomerie, whose earnings must have exceeded £2 million in 1995, money is a considerable imperative. His total prize-money in Europe, accumulated since he turned professional in 1987, could pass £5 million this week. Only Nick Faldo and Bernhard Langer have won more. "It sounds a lot," Montgomerie said, before adding: "It is an awful lot."

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The framework document proposes that, for winning a gold medal, a British athlete would receive £20,000. It has still to be decided whether the money would come from the BOA or through the National

Lottery. However, several leading figures who attended the association's annual general meeting in London yesterday are opposed to the suggestion. Dick Palmer, *chef de mission* in Atlanta, said: "I think this proposal would be indigestible for British sport. I certainly think there should be incentives for competitors to continue taking part in the Games. For instance, after 1992, Steve Redgrave should certainly have been given more support for the following four years, and I would like to see him given money now to persuade him to continue rowing until 2000."

In recent years, Redgrave has only received direct funding of £15,000 from the Sports Aid Foundation, which is privately funded through donations, although he has also enjoyed several sponsorships.

Hickey said: "I personally find this suggestion uncom-

fortable. However, the competitors in Atlanta are from a different era and you have got to move with the times."

Britain is one of the few leading sporting nations that does not have a "cash-for-medals" policy. France, which won 15 gold medals in Atlanta, awards £35,000 for a gold medal, £20,000 for a silver and £15,000 for a bronze. Italy is even more generous, with gold medal-winners getting £30,000, plus £60,000 for a pension scheme that competitors can withdraw after they are 45.

The proposal got a mixed response last night from former Olympic medal-winners. Chris Brasher, the 1956 steeplechase champion, said:

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DES JENSON

SNOOKER

O'Sullivan feasting on slimline tonic

By PHIL YATES

RONNIE O'SULLIVAN may have ambitions to run a marathon but, as he again displayed in reaching the quarter-finals of the Regal Scottish Masters at Motherwell yesterday, he sprints around the table with unparalleled fluency.

Even though he was not at his inspirational best, he needed only 95 minutes to defeat Darren Morgan 5-3. It was the fifth time in as many meetings that the former United Kingdom champion has beaten Morgan, who is one of his great advocates.

"Ronnie is the most gifted player ever to lift a cue and, if he gets his head down, he could become the greatest player ever," Morgan said.

O'Sullivan appears to have arrived at the long-overdue realisation that natural ability is, in isolation, insufficient to achieve consistent success. To this end, he is practising more diligently than ever and has embarked on an extensive fitness drive.

"I am trying to do things properly at the moment and that includes my general conditioning," O'Sullivan said. "I've lost three stones during the summer and I'm running anything between four and eight miles during a [fitness] session."

While he has been frustrated that a bout of influenza has prevented him from pounding the roads for the past ten days, there has been little to generate feelings of annoyance in terms of the quality of snooker that he has produced this season and the results that have followed.

O'Sullivan arrived at this tournament with his confidence high after capturing the Asian Classic in Bangkok 11 days ago. Now, consolidation is the primary objective and, against Morgan, there was nothing to suggest that the completion of a second success is beyond him.

As always, given O'Sullivan's attacking philosophy, Morgan was presented with



The Princess Royal, right, the president, with Neil Townshend, the vice-chairman, at the BOA meeting yesterday

Athletes demand money for medals

By JOHN GOODBODY

BRITAIN'S elite competitors want to be paid money for winning medals at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. The revolutionary proposal will be discussed next week by the British Olympic Association (BOA) when it carries out a two-day debriefing of the failure in Atlanta, where the team won only one gold medal.

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In recent years, Redgrave has only received direct funding of £15,000 from the Sports Aid Foundation, which is privately funded through donations, although he has also enjoyed several sponsorships.

Hickey said: "I personally find this suggestion uncom-

fortable. However, the competitors in Atlanta are from a different era and you have got to move with the times."

Britain is one of the few leading sporting nations that does not have a "cash-for-medals" policy. France, which won 15 gold medals in Atlanta, awards £35,000

Late wickets for Millns secures fantasy crown



Peter Stewart, right, is congratulated by Micky Stewart

PETER STEWART, the winner of *The Times* Interactive Team Cricket game, returned yesterday to Lord's, where he worked for four years, to collect his first prize of £10,000 from Micky Stewart, the former England manager. His winning entry lay in fourth place when the final round of matches began last week but had sneaked ahead of the rest of the field by 37 points when the season closed on Sunday evening.

Stewart, 31, invested many hours in monitoring the fortunes of his numerous entries and transferring players. He followed the progress of games in the sports pages of *The Times*, on radio and teletext, and drew up charts to help him change personnel minutes before the 6pm deadlines each Monday.

"I thought I had blown my chances when I left Andrew Caddick out of my winning team for the last round of championship games and

then saw him take ten wickets," Stewart said yesterday. "I had lost a bit of faith in him after he missed a championship match at Canterbury and was then inexplicably left out of the Oval Test match by England."

"But several other players came up trumps for me in the last round, such as Gooch, Robin Smith, Simmons, Ramprakash and Millns, whose four wickets on the morning after Leicestershire celebrated winning the title were vital. Even so, I would have done better to leave my team as it was. My final set of transfers was the only one that cost me points."

Fortunately for the winner, his nearest rivals fared even more badly over the closing days of the season. Both of the second and third-placed selec-

tions led the competition at some stage in the last few weeks.

"It was so close in the end that I feel very fortunate to have won," Stewart said. "One or two wickets here or there

Gooch, Smith and Nixon. He dropped the last-named for the last round of fixtures, as he thought Karl Krikken, Derbyshire's wicketkeeper, would do better against Durham than Nixon, of Leicestershire, who would against Middlesex. He was right.

Stewart usually dropped players if they were chosen for England, on the basis that runs and wickets are harder to come by in internationals. He frequently took advantage of the chance to transfer up to two players each week, fielding 35 men during the course of the summer.

Stewart, a history graduate living in Muswell Hill, north London, worked as a steward at Lord's for four years until 1992, when he went to Florida to coach tennis. There he developed myalgic encephalo-

myelitis (ME), which has kept him out of work since, though he hopes to resume coaching soon. He played as a batsman for Nottingham University and Alexandra Park, and follows Middlesex.

He may use his prize to watch England play in New Zealand this winter. He also received £500 worth of Kent & Curwen cricket clothes and a complete Sky Sports satellite package, courtesy of PACE. Second place went to Mr P. Schofield, of Bolton, and third to Mr J. Eaton, of Brentwood, Essex, both of whom receive Kent & Curwen clothing and Sky Sports packages in addition to cash prizes of £500 and £250 respectively.

Mr Eaton also won the fourth-place prize, and Mr N. Kalb, of London, was fifth. They both receive Kent & Curwen clothing and Sky Sports packages. The final manager-of-the-month award went to Mr D. J. Hornsby, of Kingston, Surrey.

K&G



PACE

Akram lined up to fill shoes of Ambrose at Northampton

By SIMON WILDE

MOHAMMAD AKRAM, one of the best fast-bowling prospects in the world, has been lined up to play for Northamptonshire next year, so heralding the close of the county career of Curtly Ambrose.

Northamptonshire invited Akram, who played in the Pakistan side that clinched the Test series against England at the Oval last month, for talks this week and the parties agreed terms for a one-year contract, although he would have to wait to expectations, he would probably return in 1998.

With Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis sharing the new ball for Pakistan, Akram's opportunities at Test level have been limited, but he showed promise during the tour of England, returned a career-best seven for 51 against Leicestershire and

time the English season would well under way. In the past, Ambrose, 33, did not always join Northamptonshire punctually or fit, evidence of grueling international commitments dating back to his West Indies debut in 1988.

There is also the possibility next year that inter-island matches in the Caribbean will detain players until June and that is something that may cause other counties to review their arrangements with West Indies players. Walsh, the West Indies captain, has verbally agreed to rejoin Gloucestershire but with the proviso that the West Indies Cricket Board does not require his services.

For all their problems getting him on the field, Northamptonshire can have few complaints about Ambrose's record once he was there. In 78 first-class appearances over six seasons, he claimed 318 wickets at 21 apiece and there were few bowlers whom country batsmen would rather avoid. The same may one day be said of his successor.

Shane Warne yesterday withdrew from the Australian party that travels to India next month because his spinning finger has not healed sufficiently after surgery in May. His place on the tour, which includes a Test match in Delhi and a one-day tournament that also involves South Africa, will be filled by Peter McIntyre, the South Australia leg spinner.

India will go into the programme under a new manager, Madan Lal, the former all-rounder, who was yesterday appointed to replace Sandeep Patil, 42, lost his job just days after the team had beaten Pakistan 3-2 by a series of one-day internationals in Canada.

Pakistan, alongside the other Test playing nations, were yesterday invited by India to a limited-overs tournament they plan to stage next year to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of independence. Pakistan, who have cancelled three tours of India since 1991 because of concerns over security, have yet to reply to the invitation.

THE LEADING 100 ENTRIES IN THE TIMES' INTERACTIVE TEAM CRICKET CHAMPIONSHIP

Pos	Team (Player's name)	Pts	Pos	Team (Player's name)	Pts
1	Spread Eagles 3rd XI (P Stewart)	21,031	25	Sandwich Slugs 1st XI	19,748
2	Scotsmen A (P Schofield)	20,984	26	The Ton Machine (N Kelly)	19,735
3	Estons Coats 2nd XI (E Eaton)	20,983	27	Left Fielders (D Tait)	19,725
4	Estons Coats 3rd XI (E Eaton)	20,705	28	Side Midwives (J Tracy)	19,699
5	Kab's Corkeens 2nd XI (Kab)	20,633	29	Ricardo's Marvels (R Williams)	19,693
6	Estons Coats 3rd XI (E Eaton)	20,456	30	Torridge Champs (C Hubert)	19,691
7	Opportunities 1st XI (P Stewart)	20,393	31	Lightly Lads (L Mardon)	19,678
8	Connells Bar 2nd (Blackburn)	20,375	32	Red Devilz (A Jackson)	19,676
9	Connells Bar 3rd (Blackburn)	20,321	33	Thuggerz 2nd XI (A Ghani)	19,661
10	Opportunities 3rd XI (P Stewart)	20,303	34	DJM 5 (D Mead)	19,652
11	KP Allstars 3rd XI (P Patel)	20,235	35	The Crofters (J Hunt)	19,633
12	Opportunities 4th XI (P Stewart)	20,107	36	Primethers (C Hobart)	19,557
13	Leckwicks Woes (R J Well)	20,092	37	Lefty Lads (A Jackson)	19,554
14	Harrowers XI (R J Well)	20,070	38	Devon's Diamonds (D Tatton)	19,548
15	Opposites Boys (D J Hornsby)	20,063	39	Kab's Corkeens 3rd XI (Kab)	19,542
16	Teddy 3 (B Basu)	20,093	40	Ottery 5 (M Long)	19,525
17	Caroline's (A Luckhurst)	19,975	41	Spike Thomas XI (T E Webb)	19,523
18	The Rite Rite (A Luckhurst)	19,963	42	Spudz (S Hutchinson)	19,519
19	Connells Bar 1st (Blackburn)	19,952	43	Connells A (A Luckhurst)	19,519
20	Cheadle High School (M Roberts)	19,944	44	PJ Mead	19,456
21	Fred's Team (P Price)	19,902	45	Chilly Six (M Long)	19,405
22	Abstins (P Stewart)	19,806	46	Stars Wines 3 (Z Ali)	19,391
23	GB's First XI (D Brooks)	19,803	47	The Tid-Bits (B Woodley)	19,371
24	Eastbrook Wonders (P Rawlinson)	19,795	48	Charlie 3 (C Webb)	19,322

INTERACTIVE TEAM CRICKET SCOREBOARD

Pos	Team (Player's name)	Pts	Pos	Team (Player's name)	Pts
1	Jones Boys One (M Jones)	19,237	25	Stilettos (M Merchant)	19,025
2	Wig's Wonders (Wiggy Jones)	19,028	26	Early Birds 3 (M Whitley)	19,028
3	Stilettos (M Merchant)	19,022	27	Beamer Boys (B Goodman)	19,003
4	Kim's Kinders (K Dowsett)	19,190	28	MCM (M Powell)	19,008
5	Heave Boles Of A Time (J R Stanley)	19,190	29	Berke's Alberts 11 (B E Howes)	19,007
6	Oskay Allstars 8 (S Roberts)	19,185	30	Kab's Corkeens 3 (N Kab)	19,000
7	Flame Start (A Madcock)	19,185	31	Webster's Wombles (A Howes)	19,007
8	Connells Bar 1st (Blackburn)	19,185	32	Connells A (A Howes)	19,003
9	Stilettos (K Sutton)	19,190	33	Teddy Two (B Reed)	19,048
10	Mike's XI (N Evans)	19,144	34	Adilly 1 (M Long)	19,047
11	Merlin's (S Vale)	19,132	35	The Spotted Salamanders (A Hibberd)	19,047
12	The Lymwood Larks (D Tatton)	19,132	36	7 (no name)	19,047
13	Jones XI (A Howes)	19,108	37	Markie's XI (A Wright)	19,042
14	Jones XI (D Tatton)	19,108	38	I Have A Dream (M Squires)	19,040
15	Odify 2 (M Long)	19,059	39	MCOK Boys (A Z A Ghani)	19,030
16	Willow Wandoers (P R Steward)	19,059	40	DJM 4 (D Head)	19,017
17	Linda's Losers (L Tatton)	19,059	41	Old Southgate 21 (P Gregorius)	19,011
18	The Runners (J Tapscott)	19,080	42	Orchard Thyme (M Long)	19,002
19	Must Be Pay Day (P Farney)	19,072	43	Walsingham (M Peake)	19,003
20	Tooting Caversians (N Redfern)	19,084	44	Fatty Four (G Johnson)	19,003
21	GT Old Boys (M Airovall)	19,056	45	Amphibious Kids (M Evans)	19,003
22	Hannibal's (A Frazer)	19,027	46	Wednesdayshire (A Hibberd)	19,033

The scores in brackets are the points scored in the last week; the other scores are the cumulative points scored since the start of the season. The figures include all matches completed by September 22. Overseas players are shown in bold type. Rising Stars in italicics.

Players (001-135)

Player (No)	Runs	Wkt	Total
C J Adams (001)	1742 (145)	0	1742 (145)
G F Archer (002)	918 (163)	0	918 (163)
M A Aziz (003)	1091 (64)	0	1091 (64)
M A Ashwin (004)	439 (3)	0	439 (3)
R J Bailey (005)	722 (125)	0	722 (125)
M J Ball (006)	1426 (124)	0	1426 (124)
M G Beaven (007)	1225 (135)	0	1225 (135)
D J Beckton (008)	869 (128)	0	869 (128)
P D Bowler (009)	1220 (128)	0	1220 (128)
R J Butt (010)	1220 (128)	0	1220 (128)
R J Butt (011)	1220 (128)	0	1220 (128)
R J Butt (012)	1220 (128)	0	1220 (128)
R J Butt (013)	1220 (128)	0	1220 (128)
S T Curtis (024)	529 (3)	0	529 (3)
J A Daley (025)	477 (3)	0	477 (3)
A J Dalton (026)	37 (1)	0	37 (1)
R J Darrow (027)	207 (1)	0	207 (1)
M P Downham (028)	337 (41)	0	337 (41)
N H Fausthofer (029)	1068 (304)	0	1068 (304)
A J Evans (030)	1068 (304)	0	1068 (304)
A J Evans (031)	1068 (304)	0	1068 (304)
D F Fletcher (032)	1102 (73)	0	1102 (73)
R J Goffe (033)	1156 (16)	0	1156 (16)
M A Goffe (034)	90 (1)	0	90 (1)
N A Goode (035)</			

RACING: FAVOURITE FOR 2,000 GUINEAS HEADS LIST OF OWNER'S TWO-YEAR-OLDS SET TO ENJOY BENEFITS OF WINTER IN MIDDLE EAST

JULIAN HERBERT

Bahhare is latest recruit for Dubai experiment

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

HAMDAN AL-MAKTOUM has decided to follow the successful example set by his brother, Sheikh Mohammed, and is sending his best two-year-olds to Dubai this winter. Bahhare, the unbeaten John Dunlop-trained colt who is the 5-1 favourite for next season's 2,000 Guineas, will head the list of top juveniles soon to head for the Middle East sunshine. He will be joined by Sahn and, in all probability, Sarayir, the Dick Hern-trained filly who is 16-1 for the 1,000 Guineas after a sparkling five-length debut win at Salisbury.

However, as details emerged at Goodwood yesterday of the latest development in the Dubai "experiment", it would appear that Hamdan Al-Maktoom has decided on some subtle but important differences to the Godolphin operation masterminded by his brother.

All his two-year-olds going to Dubai will return to their original trainers when they are flown to Britain in the spring, removing much of the anguish which has flowed from Sheikh Mohammed's

horses being switched to the Godolphin operation.

Dunlop said: "Several of my better two-year-olds are going to Dubai for the winter and will return to the stable. They will be looked after there by my staff under the supervision of one of my assistants. My stable lads will ride the horses out there. I understand they will be going fairly soon, in the next two or three weeks."

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: INTIKHAB
(3.20 Pontefract)
Next best: Southerly Wind
(3.50 Pontefract)

Results from the Dubai experiment have been extremely successful and I can understand why they want to do it."

The apparent swiftness of the decision was underlined when Angus Gold, racing manager to Hamdan Al-Maktoom, was able to supply only the briefest details concerning numbers and timing. "This has only just happened

and if I sound vague it is because I don't have the final details. It could be more than 20 two-year-olds are involved. It might be only five."

Hamdan Al-Maktoom has 240 horses in training in Britain, including around 110 two-year-olds. Until now he has sent some three-year-olds to race in Dubai and the only two-year-old to make the trip, Bint Shadayid, subsequently joined Godolphin.

The success enjoyed by Sheikh Mohammed-owned horses who have wintered in Dubai has been little short of astonishing. Lammtarwa, who won his only race as a two-year-old, returned to Britain last year to win the Derby, the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes and the Prix de Triomphe. Moonshiel won the Oaks last year while Almanzor scooped the Epsom classic and Irish Derby in 1994. Mark Of Esteem followed up this year by landing the 2,000 Guineas, and Halling and Classic Cliche have between them won a host of group one victories.

Those trainers affected by the apparent swiftness of the decision were put on a tight leash. Going on which horse was won (4-5m), how far, how hard, how soft, good, bad, easy, home to home. Trainer, age and weight. Trainer plus any allowances. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

Hamdan Al-Maktoom's decision were putting on a brave face yesterday, although some will be less than pleased to lose their classic hopefuls for around five months.

Ben Hanbury, whose Royal Ascot winner, Tippy Creek, has already been flown to Dubai, is an enthusiastic supporter of the idea. "It's good for any horse to have five months in the sunshine. I am a great believer in Dubai with its lovely gallops and tremendous climate. It can only benefit any horse that goes there."

What remains unclear is whether yesterday's decision owed more to Sheikh Mohammed, the pioneer and driving force behind the Dubai experiment, or the genuine wishes of his older brother.

Timarida will miss the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe and will run instead in the Dubai Champion Stakes at Newmarket, a spokesperson for trainer John Oxx said yesterday. She won the Irish Champion Stakes at Leopardstown but connections have decided against the £40,000 supplementary fee to run in the Arc.



Hagwah, given a fine front-running ride by Roberts, lands the ROA Foundation Stakes at Goodwood yesterday

GOODWOOD

THUNDERER

2.30 LOVE HAS NO PRIDE (nap) 4.00 Wizard King
3.00 Ortolan 4.20 Renzo
3.30 Southern Power 5.00 Bachelors Pad
5.35 Koonthary

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.00 DON BOSIO (nap). 3.30 Candle Smile, 5.35 Saw-e-ld.

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

103 (13) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) 8 Halt 10-0 ... B West (4) 8B
Racecard number Draw in brackets. Site-ground term (F - flat), P - pointed up, U - unseated rider, D - disqualified, H - horse, N - name, Days - last outing, J & jumps, F & flat, (B) blinks, V - vent - hood, E - Eye-shield, C - course winner, D - distance winner, CD -

course and distance winner, BP - best horse in listed race, Going on which horse was won (4-5m, firm, good, fast, soft, easy, home). Name to home. Trainer, age and weight. Trainer plus any allowances. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM DRAW: 6F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

2.30 VULCAN GAS APPLIANCES NURSERY HANDICAP (2-Y-O: £2,684; 2m 10f) (10 runners)

101 (10) 1519 NORTHERN SUN 25 (F) (T Murray) 1 Miles 9-7 ... T Davies
102 (9) 610 GOODWILL LASA 40 (G) (Selan Al Kabeer) M Stake 9-12 (Sed) ... T Davies
103 (8) 1120 ORTOLAN 22 (G,F,S) (S Selan Al Kabeer) 9-12 ... T Davies
104 (7) 6610 LOVE HAS NO PRIDE 20 (F) (Mrs D Robinson) 9-12 ... T Davies
105 (6) 6550 TALISMAN 6 (K) (Putter) 5-7 ... T Davies
106 (5) 5014 PALEOMON 16 (B) (Selling) 8-7 ... T Davies
107 (4) 3038 SELECT STAR 7 (Selling) 8-5 ... T Davies
108 (3) 0009 SUM 100 12 (M) (Lamont) 8-4 ... T Davies
109 (2) 0005 TRAVAIL EMPLOYMENT GROUP 22 (F) (Lamont) 8-4 ... T Davies
110 (1) 0005 MERCLESS 6 (P) (Lamont) 8-1 ... T Davies
BETTING: 2-0 Bold Ortolan, 4-1 Goodwill Lasa, 5-1 Northern Sun, 6-1 Love Has No Pride, 10-1 MERCLESS, 12-1 Select Star, 13-1 Lamont, 14-1 Bold Ortolan, 15-1 Northern Sun, 16-1 Love Has No Pride, 17-1 Lamont, 18-1 Select Star.

FORM FOCUS

NORTHERN SUN short-head and 51 3rd of 7 to *Love Has No Pride* (17, good) in 10-runner maiden at Epsom (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 10-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 11-1 in 10-runner maiden at Sandown (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 12-1 in Blue Point handicap at Salisbury (7, firm) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 13-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 14-1 in 10-runner maiden at Sandown (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 15-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 16-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 17-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM DRAW: 6F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

3.00 JS HUMIDIFIERS HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £4,593; 7f) (15 runners)

201 (9) 202331 DON BOSIO 5 (V,D) (Selan Al Kabeer) M Stake 9-12 (Sed) ... T Davies
202 (8) 2-41 KERRY KING 34 (D) (Selan Al Kabeer) J Sedan 9-7 ... T Davies
203 (7) 654511 ORTOLAN 12 (G,F,S) (S Selan Al Kabeer) 9-7 ... T Davies
204 (6) 011120 ORTOLAN 12 (G,F,S) (S Selan Al Kabeer) 9-5 ... T Davies
205 (5) 6550 TALISMAN 16 (K) (Putter) 5-7 (W) (Selan Al Kabeer) 9-5 ... T Davies
206 (4) 3038 SELECT STAR 7 (Selling) 8-5 ... T Davies
207 (3) 2-3401 RUMY 26 (G) (Selan Al Kabeer) C Bonsai 9-3 ... T Davies
208 (2) 6-14 WAYPOINT 161 (G,F,S) (T Roberts) R Chastain 8-13 ... T Davies
209 (1) 301606 PRESS ON RUMY 8 (G,F,S) (Selan Al Kabeer) W Mahr 8-10 ... T Davies
210 (13) 5149 SHADDA CASTING 16 (D,B,F) K Roche 8-10 ... T Davies
211 (12) 158212 NEVER TWICE 19 (B,F) (T) (Selan Al Kabeer) J Sedan 8-6 ... T Davies
212 (11) 0005 TRAVAIL 13 (G) (Selan Al Kabeer) J Sedan 8-5 ... T Davies
213 (10) 0005 CAT'DOUR 13 (G) (Selan Al Kabeer) G Stirling 7-3 ... T Davies
214 (9) 414522 LUCKY REVENGE 15 (F,G,S) (S Selling) M Moore 8-2 ... T Davies
215 (1) 050116 CAT'DOUR 13 (G) (Selan Al Kabeer) G Stirling 7-3 ... T Davies
BETTING: 1-4 Never Twice 9-2 Waypoint 10-1, Salyteyk 12-1 Press On Nicky 13-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

DON BOSIO had Donkeys 61 in 15-runner maiden at Calenca (7, good to firm). Donkey neck in 8-runner maiden at Sandown (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 11-2nd of 12 to Blue Point in handicap at Salisbury (7, firm) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 12-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good to firm) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 13-1 in 10-runner maiden at Sandown (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 14-1 in 10-runner maiden at Sandown (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 15-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 16-1 in 10-runner maiden at Sandown (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 17-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 18-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 19-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 20-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 21-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 22-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 23-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 24-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 25-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 26-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 27-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 28-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 29-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 30-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 31-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 32-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 33-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 34-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 35-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 36-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. 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NORTHERN SUN 51-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 52-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 53-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 54-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 55-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 56-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 57-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 58-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 59-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 60-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 61-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 62-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 63-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. NORTHERN SUN 64-1 in 10-runner maiden at Lingfield (7, good) on 12-9. 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Train delayed in Argentina, let's tango

REVIEW

Lynne
Truss

Buck Henry made rather a hit in last night's "Great Railway Journeys" (BBC2), but I am quite sure if I passed him in the street today I wouldn't know him. Quiet, curious, anonymous, and identifiable mainly by his baseball cap and circular specs (like a cartoon character), he made the perfect vicarious travelling companion. It helped, too, that his railway journey was a steam dream, ploughing south through Argentina, from the Andes to Patagonia, through misty pampas and snow-capped mountains, in wide chuffing locomotives along single tracks, with ochre dawn light flashing on the engine's side. Cor. Pass me that oxygen mask, Buck! I think I'm about to pass out.

The trouble is that event is contrived along the way, but that it's tiresomely presented as happenstance. For example, in Buenos Aires Buck's train is

delayed by two days! Oh no! He turns up with ticket; the platform is empty. "Que pasa?" he asks for something. Man with oily rag replies train is not running late, it's just running Friday. Buck retreats in defeat but instead of kicking cars he finds - well, lots of interesting time-wasting things to do! He visits an Argentinian plastic surgeon, interviews mothers of the "disappeared", then attends a tango club, where he dances in his hat (I mean, with his hat on). Lucky that train was delayed, after all!

Along the way, he told an excellent story from a previous visit, re-enacting it with gusto. He had jumped into a cab in Buenos Aires, seen, and the driver had taken him a short distance and then stopped. "Que pasa?" (or something) Buck had naturally inquired. "No petrol," shrugged the driver, "you'll have to get out." Buck stepped out of the cab, and handed a banknote through the

window. "But this is an A-series note," complained the driver, "don't you have any B-series?"

At this point, just as the unnerved Buck was shuffling through a big wad of currency, an Argentinian businessman got into the cab and sat down. "No petrol," reported the driver, and they all shrugged together while Buck continued to shuffle through his money. "Can I help?" asked the businessman, reaching out. Gratefully, Buck handed him the notes ("After all, he was going nowhere"). At which point, of course, the cab drove off. "They did it so well I almost wanted to applaud."

Everything I watched last night seemed to concern men, machines and distinctive headgear - it began to feel like a bad dream. In *Decisive Weapons* (BBC2), the much-loved Bell-Huey helicopter of the Vietnam War was flown by men in cavalry

bats; in *The Fred Dibnah Story* (BBC2), steeplejack Fred drove his steamroller wearing a flat cap soaked in oil that it had its own flash point. Dibnah's entertaining six-part story has reached the 1990s now, and he's a "new man", so to complement the chimney-fellings, we get Hoovering with the "little lads". But the best part was still the hat, so disgusting it made his head break out in lumps.

"Scalp cappy-itis," his doctor diagnosed, and the cap hung on the bedpost, in disgrace.

Meanwhile *Decisive Weapons* told its story brilliantly - the whole Vietnam War as seen from a fast, low-flying helicopter, and without excessive recourse to "the Ride of the Valkyries" either. The Bell-Huey did everything - it transported men and supplies, fired rockets at gooks, removed the wounded and dead, and made an exciting woppa-woppa noise that nobody will ever forget. "We took them into trouble, and we got them out of trouble," said one former pilot. It sounded easy (but very stupid) put like that.

If America didn't win in Vietnam, the Bell-Huey was not to blame - except perhaps by carrying the journalists and camera crews. But it's easy to forget that the first days of Vietnam were very similar to the Gulf War: all gung-ho confidence in the equipment

machine we saw all evening.

Requiring no electricity or batteries, the clockwork radio is one of those boons to mankind (like the ever-lasting lightbulb) which are generally quashed by big business, but by various commercial miracles the "Baygen" radio is now in production in South Africa, and everyone is happy, including Nelson Mandela and HM the Queen. Baylis even won BBC Designer of the Year, so no wonder *QED* decided to update their original film. Just as affecting as the helicopters tipping into the waves was the moment when Baylis first saw his factory in Cape Town: a gleaming place with workers in a line, and his own invented radio coming out the end. What a wonderful thing to see. Overcome, he broke down in sobs, and so did I. His screwdriver had made a real difference to the world.

• Matthew Bond is away

6.00am Business Breakfast (1084)

7.00 BBC Breakfast News (Ceefax) (43355)

9.00 Breakfast News Extra (Ceefax) (816429)

9.20 Style Challenge (s) (342633)

9.45 Kirov (s) (1879249)

10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (89572)

11.00 News, regional news and weather (Teletext) (4151881)

11.05 Liberal Democratic Conference 96. Live coverage from Brighton of the final day of the conference (s). Includes News and weather at midday (3229868)

1.00 News and weather (Ceefax) (46442)

1.30 Regional News and weather (45811958)

1.40 Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (32189078)

2.55 Call My Bluff (s) (7674711) 2.35 Turnabout (s) (1383249) 3.00 The Terrace (s) (2152)

3.30 Little Bear (s) (8237591) 3.55 The Chipmunks (s) (s) (8286510) 4.20 Julia Jekyll and Harriet Hyde (Ceefax) (s) (673935) 4.35 Clarissa Explains It All (s) (Ceefax) (s) (4397626) 5.00 Newsround (Ceefax) (s) (7470442) 5.10 Byker Grove (Ceefax) (s) (2183201)

5.35 Neighbours (r) (Ceefax) (s) (129220)

6.00 News and weather (Ceefax) (807)

6.30 Regional news magazines (359)

7.00 Watchdog, Consumer magazine hosted by Anne Robinson (Ceefax) (s) (4133)

7.30 EastEnders, Pat and Roy have some news for their families. (Ceefax) (s) (171)

8.00 Animal Hospital. Shauna Lowry discovers what qualities are required to make an RSPCA inspector (Ceefax) (s) (3881)

8.30 The Hello Girls Listening In. Sylvia discovers that the engineers are listening on in the girls' private line, and are in possession of some startling revelations (Ceefax) (s) (9688)

9.00 News, Regional News; Weather (3236)

9.30 **COR** X-Files: DPO (Ceefax) (s) (99201)

10.15 They Think It's All Over. Nick Hancock composes a game of wit and sporting knowledge. Tonight's guests are Olympic 800m finalist Kelly Holmes and comedian Curtis Walker (Ceefax) (s) (385713)

10.45 **NEWS** Question Time. Now in its 18th year, the series of debates on controversial issues of the day returns. Around the table tonight are the Social Security Secretary, Peter Lilley, the Shadow Social Security Secretary, Hamid Haman, the Liberal Democrats' defence spokesman, Marlies Campbell and Bronwen Maddox, US Editor of *The Times*, David Dimbleby, is in the chair (Ceefax) (s) (326888)

11.45 FILM: Criminal Behavior (1992) starring Farrah Fawcett, A. Martinez, Dakin Matthews, John Hancock, Cliff DeYoung and Andrew Robinson. Adapted from a novel by Ross Macdonald, this quirky mystery follows a streetwise LA lawyer who, distrusting the police, decides to investigate the case of a young woman who stands accused of being a fence for herself. Directed by Michelle Miller (Ceefax) (s) (749442)

1.15-1.20am Weather (209718)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes

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6.00am Open University: Wheels of Progress (2895249) 6.25 The Evolution of Algebra (2807084) 6.50 Gender Matters (1847107)

7.15 See Hear Breakfast News (82696978)

7.30 Alvin and the Chipmunks (5328283)

7.55 Blue Peter (r) (Ceefax) (s) (2780404) 8.20 Moody (r) (s) (6574177) 8.35 Lassie (s) (2159762)

9.00 Daytime on Two: The IT Collection (808161) 9.25 The Art (817462) 9.45 Writing and Pictures (8271882) 10.00 Playhouse (s) (23263) 10.45 The Expert (s) (1287201) 11.05 Space Art (4149046)

11.15 Welsh History - Famous People (s) (912464) 11.35 Landmarks (597171) 11.45 Berlin (s) (8286262)

12.30 Working Lunch (39065) 1.00 Lifeschool (8287868) 1.25 Mad About Music (73557662) 1.45 Numberline (4822336) 1.55 The Mystery (r) (s) (61092201) 2.10 The Fugitive (2/w) (t) (Ceefax) (7255404) 3.00 News (Ceefax) (7548223) 3.05 The Natural World (s) (5806355) 3.35 News (Ceefax) and weather (4397787)

4.00 Today's the Day (s) (572) 4.20 Ready, Steady, Cook (s) (864) 5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (Ceefax) (s) (949478) 5.40 The Sky at Night (r) (Ceefax) (s) (658317)

6.00 Star Trek (Ceefax) (s) (578959)

6.45 Gower's Cricket Monthly. David Gower looks at how the County Championship was decided and England's mixed fortunes during the summer. Last in series (Ceefax) (s) (616978)

7.30 Designer Dreams. A look at some modern trends in house decoration (Ceefax) (s) (713)

8.00 Picture This: Somebody's Son. Loraine is the match at the centre of a Welsh family. Three of her four sons become involved in drugs and reduced the family home to a war zone - stealing to pay for their habit. Too late to stop her own sons, Loraine set up a self-help group to assist others, but was caught up in a tragedy. Last in the series. (Ceefax) (s) (1423) NB: Room for Improvement

8.30 Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson drives the Renault 205 GTI, Michelle Newman tests the Renault Megane Scenic and Andy Wilman drives a Nissan Micra (Ceefax) (s) (2030)

9.00 Neverwhere. (3/3) Urban fantasy drama (Ceefax) (s) (21628)

The System BBC2, 9.30pm

Coming under scrutiny in this series which looks at the dog-end of the welfare state is the benighted Child Support Agency. The Child Support Law was the biggest change to family policy since the 1960s. Its stated aim was to trace absent fathers and force them to pay for their children. But its main priority was to claw back some of the £9 billion the Treasury spent on single parents. Whereas previously the courts settled each individual case on its own merits, there was now a fixed mathematical formula used in deciding how much was owed. But people's lives are not that easily pigeonholed, as the three cases here confirm. The agency made the mistake of using right bureaucracy to solve emotional situations. Of course, the CSA became subject to reform, and now some cases are heard on their own merits - just as the magistrates used to do.

The System BBC2, 9.30pm

"After everything that we just been through, after all that we've just seen, I hope you are not thinking this has anything to do with government conspiracies or UFOs," says agent Scully, rather optimistically. A lot of young men seem to be dying around Conerville, Oklahoma, from the same cause: lightning strikes. Since only old people a year are supposed to die by lightning, the statistical improbability of so many being struck in such a small area is enough to send Scully and Mulder down to investigate. Of all the boys that die by lightning only one of them escaped death. And he's a really cool people's mobile phone address with traffic lights. He also has an electrifying crush on his boss's wife.

The X Files BBC2, 9.30pm

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9.30 **COR** The System: Misconceptions: Exploring the Child Support Agency (Ceefax) (s) (57375)

10.30 Newsnight (Ceefax) (200249)

11.15 Late Review (s) (818442)

12.00 The Limb (r) (s) (98811)

12.30am-6.00 Open University

Kimberley Evans and family (9.30pm)

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12.00 The Limb (r) (s) (98811)

12.30am-6.00 Open University

Blossom (831) 7.00 Home Improvement (4059) 7.30 Escape to Witch Mountain (83282) 8.00 Ordinary Summer (1985) 8.20-6.00 No Ordinary Summer (7574330)

7.30 Hotel (1987) 8.00 The Count of Monte Cristo (8264) 8.30 Mystery on the Beach (1979) (75749)

4.00 Matilda (1996) 8.00 Splendor in the Grass (1961) 8.30 Splendor in the Grass (1961) 9.00 Wargames (1983) (78932)

8.00 The Wizard of Oz (1939) 8.30 Once Upon a Time in the West (1968) (767823) 4.20 Fatal Beauty (1987) (713319)

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**CRICKET 42**

Champion reveals his winning formula for interactive game

SPORT

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 26 1996

RUGBY UNION 45

Why England's next captain is being kept under wraps



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Valerie

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